

## **CABINET**

**Wednesday, 23 June 2021**

Attendance:

Councillor Thompson (Chairperson)	– Leader and Cabinet Member for Partnership Working
Councillor Cutler (Vice-Chair)	– Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance and Service Quality
Councillor Clear	– Cabinet Member for Communities and Wellbeing
Councillor Gordon-Smith	– Cabinet Member for Built Environment
Councillor Murphy	– Cabinet Member for Climate Emergency
Councillor Tod	– Cabinet Member for Economic Recovery

Others in attendance who addressed the meeting:

Councillors Brook and Horrill

David Light (TACT)

Apologies for Absence:

Councillors Learney

[Full audio and video recording](#)

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### 1. **MEMBERSHIP OF CABINET BODIES ETC.**

RESOLVED:

That Councillor Fern replace Councillor Bentote as the Chairperson of the North Whiteley Development Forum for the remainder of 2021/22.

### 2. **DISCLOSURE OF INTERESTS**

Councillor Tod declared a personal (but not prejudicial) interest in respect of reports due to his role as a County Councillor.

### 3. **MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING HELD ON 25 MAY 2021.**

RESOLVED:

That the minutes of the previous meeting held on 25 May 2021 be agreed as a correct record.

#### 4. **PUBLIC PARTICIPATION**

Janet Berry and Patrick Davies spoke during public participation regarding report CAB3300 below.

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

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

##### Councillor Murphy

The Council had signed up to be a supporter of the Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill.

##### Councillor Tod

Provided an update on the monies paid out to support businesses impacted by Covid. £3.6m had been paid out in additional restriction grants and a further £1.3m had been allocated to the Council from the government to continue business support.

##### Councillor Clear

Provided an update on the successful opening of the new Winchester Sport and Leisure Park with numbers attending and membership subscriptions increasing, despite reduced occupancy levels due to Covid restrictions.

The small grants scheme was open for up to £500 for local community associations and voluntary groups and crowd funding grants up to £2000 were also available.

#### 6. **WINNALL FLATS OPEN SPACE PROJECT - COMMUNITY INFRASTRUCTURE LEVY (CIL) FUNDING** (CAB3305)

Councillor Gordon-Smith introduced the report which proposed funding to enable an upgraded landscape area, community park and small play area around the existing Winnall flats. He emphasised that although the report referred to a "pocket park" the entire area was approximately two hectares in size.

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

Welcomed the proposals but requested confirmation that the project was supported by existing residents and that they expected to share the space. In addition, did it address parking and open space amenities and private space requirements in the area? Was the sum of £755k likely to have to be increased?

The Housing Development and Strategy Manager responded to the points raised by Councillor Horrill and confirmed that various consultations had been undertaken with residents, the most recent in October 2020, and no negative comments on the proposals had been received. The Strategic Director advised

that the CIL funding was a contribution to the costs which could be supplemented by Housing Revenue Account (HRA) funding if required, following further consultation as to exact details of the scheme.

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

RESOLVED:

That an allocation of £755,000 be approved to help fund the provision of a new public open space in association with the provision of new development at Winnall Flats. The allocation of funds will be conditional on the approval of the business case for the New Build housing scheme.

7. **NEW COUNCIL HOMES, WINNALL FLATS SITE – FINAL BUSINESS CASE (LESS EXEMPT APPENDICES)**  
(CAB3300)

In the absence of Councillor Learney, Councillor Thompson introduced the report which sought authorisation to proceed with a new homes scheme for 76 new homes at the Winnall flats site. The homes would be built to a high energy efficiency standard and the scheme would also improve the surrounding open space area (as detailed in report CAB3305 elsewhere on the agenda).

Janet Berry and Patrick Davies addressed Cabinet during public participation as summarised briefly below.

Janet Berry

Considered the proposed flats were too small and would not be genuinely affordable to many people, for example key workers. She believed that the short-hold tenancies proposed would not offer long term security for tenants and she queried whether the limited occupancy levels would result in tenants being evicted if they exceeded these levels. Protection such as an independent residents' advisor and residents' charter should be put in place. Instead of over-developing the Winnall site, the Council should consider building new homes on other land in its ownership.

Patrick Davies

Agreed with the points raised by Ms Berry. Queried why the scheme provided new flats in area where there were already large numbers of flats. Strongly supported principle of providing more council homes but believed this was the wrong area and wrong scheme. Queried why the financial aspects of the proposals were contained in exempt appendices so the decision-making lacked transparency.

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

Generally greatly supported the provision of new homes, with different types of accommodation and tenure. Queried whether it would have been

possible to develop more homes on this site and whether £250,000 was a fair price to pay per unit? Requested further clarity on the option of letting the flats through a housing company. Questioned why the report also sought authority to dispose of shared ownership schemes at Stanmore and Kings Worthy and believed that a separate report detailing any change in policy would have been more appropriate.

The Leader, the Service Lead - New Homes Delivery and the Housing Development and Strategy Manager responded to the points raised by Councillor Horrill and also during public participation. It was emphasised that the Winnall flats scheme should be considered as part of the wider Council new homes building scheme where all homes had been built to affordable or social rent levels. The scheme density could have been increased but at the expense of providing a good quality surrounding open space environment for new and existing tenants. A number of factors had impacted on the tender price including demolition of existing structures, asbestos removal, utility diversion and upgrading the electric sub station, as well as meeting high energy efficiency/low carbon standards and the new fire regulations such as sprinklers.

The Strategic Director: Services advised that work and understanding of the potential benefits of a housing company was evolving, with a report to be submitted to the Business and Housing Policy Committee and Cabinet later this year. It was anticipated that a housing company could be used for this scheme, but it could also operate as a Housing Revenue Account (HRA) scheme.

At the invitation of the Leader, David Light (TACT) stated that TACT had queried the one person occupancy restrictions and had recommended that one block be reserved for council tenants.

Officers responded to a number of further questions from Cabinet Members on the impact of the nitrates mitigation policy and the implications of the single occupancy restrictions. The Strategic Director confirmed that the council's agreed policies were directed towards supporting tenants who might find themselves in an overcrowding situation.

Cabinet then moved into exempt session to consider the exempt appendices to the report before returning to open session to agree the recommendations as set out below.

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

#### **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:**

- 1. That an increase in the scheme budget of £896,691, funded from the "unallocated schemes" provision in the New Homes Capital Programme and capital expenditure of up to £18,840,000 including contingency funding and estimated fees (as set out in exempt appendix 3 of the report), be approved.**

## RESOLVED:

2. That the Corporate Head of Asset Management be authorised to award and enter into a design and build contract to construct 76 properties at Winnall Flats site, Winnall Manor Road, Winchester with Wates Construction Ltd for the sum as detailed in exempt appendix 1 of report CAB3300.
3. That the Corporate Head of Asset Management (CHAM) be authorised to negotiate and agree terms for easements, wayleaves and related agreements with utility suppliers, telecom/media providers and neighbours and relevant associated legal agreements in order to facilitate the development.
4. That the Corporate Head of Asset Management be authorised to dispose of the shared ownership properties, and other tenure mix, on this site as supported by the Housing Development Strategy agreed by Cabinet on 10 March 2021 (CAB3291) and Business Case.
5. That the Corporate Head of Asset Management be authorised to dispose of the shared ownership and discounted market sale properties at the Valley, Stanmore and the site off Hookpit Farm Lane, Kings Worthy.
6. That the Corporate Head of Asset Management be authorised to negotiate to purchase/lease Block B (41 flats) to enable the flats to be let at sub-market rents in partnership with a third party or representatives of a council owned housing company.
7. That the disposal of open space following the consultation exercise undertaken in September 2020 be approved.
8. That the Corporate Head of Asset Management be authorised to agree a scheme to mitigate nitrates in perpetuity either on sites owned by the Council, at Micheldever wetland scheme or purchase nitrates credits from a 3<sup>rd</sup> party prior to the occupation of the new homes located at the Winnall Flats site.
9. That the Corporate Head of Asset Management be authorised to submit a funding bid to Homes England, and if applicable, negotiate and finalise a grant figure and agree the terms and conditions associated of the grant funding and to enter into a funding agreement.
10. That the Corporate Head of Asset Management be authorised, in consultation with the Service Lead – Legal Services to include a condition in the tenancy agreement and shared ownership lease to limit occupancy levels.

11. That the Corporate Head of Housing be authorised to approve the bid for estate improvement funding for the cost of improvements to the areas around the existing blocks of flats.

8. **REVISED TERMS OF REFERENCE FOR MAJOR DEVELOPMENT AREA FORA**  
(CAB3306)

Councillor Gordon-Smith introduced the report which proposed revised terms of reference for the three major development fora and confirmed the intention to continue the West of Waterlooville Forum.

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

Spoke in opposition to the proposals as she considered they should have been submitted to the individual Fora prior to consideration at Cabinet. She also believed there had been plans to discontinue the West of Waterlooville Forum but it was essential that this continue. She requested that further and wider consultation be undertaken as part of the proposed annual review.

Councillor Cutler and Clear responded to the comments made by Councillor Brook including confirming that there were no plans to discontinue the West of Waterlooville Forum and agreeing that the annual review of the terms of reference include external partners.

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

RESOLVED:

That the revised terms of reference for MDAs attached at appendix 1 to the report be adopted and reviewed annually.

9. **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>
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10	New council homes – Winnall flats site (exempt appendices)	)	Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including
13	New council homes – purchase of 54 homes at Whiteley	)	the authority holding that information). (Para 3 Schedule 12A refers)
14	City Offices energy efficiency improvement works	)	

10. **NEW COUNCIL HOMES, WINNALL FLATS SITE – FINAL BUSINESS CASE (EXEMPT APPENDICES)**

(CAB3300 exempt appendices)

The following is a summary of the questions asked and debate during the exempt session of the meeting regarding these exempt appendices. However, it is recorded in an open minute to support the principle of being an open and transparent council.

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

Questioned the reasons for the significant rise in tender costs over a relatively short space of time and the detail of the Carter Jonas valuation. She queried whether the recommendation regarding shared ownership approvals for other properties should have been subject to a separate report.

The Service Lead - New Homes Delivery and the Housing Development and Strategy Manager responded to the queries raised, confirming that previous figures were based on budget estimates whereas the figures now available were actual costs. Generally, construction costs were rising nationally.

Officers responded to Cabinet Member questions regarding the likely rent level and also confirmed that the long term requirements of increased electricity usage had been provided for by an additional electricity sub-station

Cabinet then returned to open session in order to consider the report's recommendations.

RESOLVED:

That the contents of the exempt appendices be noted.

11. **NEW COUNCIL HOMES - PURCHASE OF 54 HOMES AT WHITELEY**

Cabinet considered the above report which set out proposals regarding the purchase of new council homes at Whiteley (detail in exempt minute).

12. **CITY OFFICES ENERGY EFFICIENCY IMPROVEMENT WORKS**  
**(DECARBONISATION)**  
(CAB3307)

Cabinet considered the above report which contained proposals for energy efficiency works to be undertaken in the city offices (detail in exempt minute).

The meeting commenced at 9.35 am and concluded at 11.30 am