

CABINET

RECORD OF DECISIONS of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Friday, 23 August 2019 at 10.00 am at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

Present

Councillors Steve Pitt (in the Chair)
 Dave Ashmore
 Suzy Horton
 Darren Sanders
 Lynne Stagg
 Matthew Winnington
 Rob Wood
 Tom Wood

88. Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

These had been received from Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE who was on other council business and Councillor Lee Hunt who was on leave.

89. Declarations of Interests (AI 2)

There were no declarations of members' interests.

90. Nitrate Neutrality Mitigation - measures to enable new housing development (AI 3)

Councillor Pitt, Deputy Leader, explained the need for this special meeting to take action on this pressing issue. Ian Maguire, Assistant Director City Development & Regeneration, presented the report on behalf of the Director of Regeneration and the Director of Housing, Neighbourhood and Building Services. The report was an update on progress within the City Council as well as work with partners. The proposed 'nitrate neutrality' mitigation strategy would enable the granting of some planning permissions to recommence as Local Planning Authority, and officers would continue to work with other authorities and partner organisations on the wider, long-term solution and strategy for the sub-region.

Joint work had been taking place between the Planning and Housing officers to address water efficiency in the council's housing stock (at no extra cost to PCC tenants) to create nitrate credits and with some empty housing stock in the Housing Revenue Account this also helped the 'nitrates bank'. Therefore the council is at the position of being able to allow new housing and recommence planning permission, although this may be for a limited period, it was estimated to be for between 1-3 years.

The Deputy Leader, on behalf of the Cabinet, thanked all the officers for their work on this. The Cabinet Members asked questions which included the inclusion of Leamington House and Horatia House vacancies and future

development of sites, which were factored into the projections. Officers are working with developers and the City Council is also looking to develop social housing and social care sites. It was also clarified that European Law would still be in place if the United Kingdom left the European Union in October. The Cabinet Members were impressed by the efforts by those taking part in all of these discussions, especially when the majority of the problem was linked to agriculture. It was further confirmed that the matter does have government attention with work already taking place to improve water quality and Councillor Pitt had been to a meeting in Southampton also attended by the National Farmers' Union. David Williams, Chief Executive, stressed that lobbying would continue at a sub-regional basis and via the Local Government Association (LGA).

Councillor Judith Smyth also addressed the Cabinet to raise questions on the impact on housing development and water quality; this is not minuted in full but can be viewed as part of the webcast of the meeting here:

<https://livestream.com/accounts/14063785/Full-Cabinet23Aug2019>

Councillor Pitt reiterated the urgent need to address this matter and Councillor Winnington, as Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Social Care, stressed that not only private development but social development had been impacted and there was the need to move things forward.

DECISIONS

The Cabinet:

- 1. Noted the progress and on-going work set out in the report.**
- 2. Noted the on-going improvements being undertaken to the Council's assets and particularly the council housing stock that is improving water efficiency and contributing to reducing nitrate emissions**
- 3. Noted the measures being taken through the Council's management of its open spaces to reduce nitrate application and nutrient emissions**
- 4. Noted the dialogue between the Council, the University of Portsmouth, and Natural England to support the introduction of environmentally friendly measures to reduce nutrient build-up in the Solent.**
- 5. Noted the dialogue between water supply and treatment companies, registered social landlords, developers and public bodies to establish a strategic partnership to reduce water consumption and nutrient emissions within the area.**
- 6. Noted the intention to create and manage a database of contributions to mitigation to offset the potential impact of new development, such creation subject to final Cabinet approval.**
- 7. Noted an intention to adopt as soon as possible the combination of measures, methodology and evidence set out in the report as the Council's interim strategy for demonstrating 'nitrate neutrality' in the determination of planning applications such adoption subject to final Cabinet approval.**
- 8. Will continue to work with other local councils through PfSH, the**

Local Government Association and Members of Parliament to lobby central government to resolve the contradictory positions held by agencies within Defra and between Defra and the Ministry for Housing, Communities and Local Government and to develop a comprehensive, long-term, funded mitigation strategy for the Solent area.

The meeting concluded at 10.25 am.

Deputy Leader of the Council