

CABINET

RECORD OF DECISIONS of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Tuesday, 14 July 2020 at 12.00 pm at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

Present

Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE (in the Chair)

Councillors Steve Pitt
Dave Ashmore
Suzy Horton
Lee Hunt
Darren Sanders
Lynne Stagg
Matthew Winnington
Tom Wood
Hugh Mason

Also present during the virtual meeting were Cllrs Simon Boshier, Cal Corkery, Scott Payter-Harris and George Fielding.

30. Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

There were no apologies for absence.

31. Declarations of Interests (AI 2)

There were no declarations of members' interests.

32. Record of Previous Decision Meeting - 10 March 2020 and Leader's Statement (AI 3)

The record of decisions of the previous Cabinet meeting held on 10 March 2020 were approved as a correct record.

Black Lives Matter - Leader's Statement

As this was the first Cabinet meeting of the municipal year Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson as Leader wished to make a statement, following the killing of George Floyd in America and the global protests, to show solidarity against racism the Council had lit up the Spinnaker Tower for a week in purple. All staff had been written to regarding the intention to eradicate racism and give support to BAME groups. This would also be raised by members of the Council at their meeting the following week.

33. Decision taken by the Chief Executive under Standing Order 58 - HIVE Portsmouth (information item) (AI 4)

The urgent decision taken on 27 March by the Chief Executive to approve the Strategic Partnership Agreement between the HIVE and Portsmouth City Council was noted.

34. Modern Slavery Statement (AI 5)

Lisa Wills, Strategy and Partnership Manager, introduced the report which set out the council's second published Modern Slavery Transparency Statement and explained the local context and involvement in the Hampshire & Isle of Wight Modern Slavery Partnership, which provided valuable data. The importance of this work had been seen recently with the uncovering of potential victims in a Leicester textile factory due to a Covid-19 outbreak; the new Anti-Slavery Commissioner had commented on the need to have supply chains free from modern slavery. The City Council was working with the training sub-group to develop consistent Hampshire wide training to staff.

Councillor Lee Hunt, Cabinet Member for Community Safety, was grateful for the comprehensive report and spoke about the local situation and serious effect on those subject to modern slavery practices. He therefore welcomed all the partnership work already underway and the rolling out of communications and training on the subject.

Councillor Hugh Mason commented on the need to raise awareness in the local communities to ensure that signs are spotted and acted upon.

DECISIONS - The Cabinet approved:

- i) The Modern Slavery Transparency Statement for publication on the council's website (see appendix 1)**
- ii) The programme of work set out in section 5 of the report.**
- iii) That Full Council be asked to note the recommendations for information only.**

35. LGBT+ Champion appointment - for Children and Young People (AI 6)

Councillor Suzy Horton, Cabinet Member for Children Families and Education, explained the background to this item, with a previous Notice of Motion regarding the teaching of relationships, and she had attended the hustings organised by the young people who had wanted all the councillor nominees involved. The young people had chosen Councillor Udy who had already campaigned on their behalf. Councillor Udy was present at the Cabinet meeting and confirmed that she wished to take on this role and was keen to be involved in this work.

DECISION: The Cabinet appointed Cllr Claire Udy as Portsmouth's LBGT+ Children and Young People's Champion and asked Cllr Udy to undertake this role with support and input from Cllrs Suzy Horton, Chris Attwell and George Fielding.

36. Appointments to Outside Bodies and Champion Appointments (AI 7)

Due to the Coronavirus cancellation of local elections the political groups made few changes in their nominations to outside bodies, content for the current appointees from 2019/20 municipal year to carry on where a new nomination was not specified.

a) Appointments to outside bodies

The following appointments were made:

Motiv8 - Councillor Hugh Mason

Elementary Education Act Trust - Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson to replace Cllr Rob Wood; the trust accepted 5 appointments the previous year so the other appointments did not need to be changed.

Kings Theatre - Cllr Luke Stubbs to be asked to continue, rather than appointing Cllr Linda Symes at this time.

Mary Rose Trust - Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson to replace Cllr Rob Wood (who had a place as Lord Mayor)

Portchester Crematorium Joint Committee - Cllrs Lee Hunt and Dave Ashmore

The following 3 changes reflected the change in portfolios, with Cllr Hugh Mason the new Cabinet Member for Planning Policy and City Development:

Building Control Partnership - Cllr Hugh Mason (Member Rep)

Minerals and Waste Development Framework Members' Steering Group - Cllr Hugh Mason

Solent Forum - Cllr Hugh Mason

Portsmouth Fostering Panel - all groups would be asked to make nominations to fill the vacancy

b) Champion Roles

The following appointments were made:

Armed Forces Champion - Cllr Gerald Vernon-Jackson to continue as the official champion, to ensure compliance with the Gold Employer Award this should be a cabinet member, with Cllr Frank Jonas and Cllr Tom Coles giving their support.

Mental Health Champion - Cllr Matthew Winnington

Homelessness Champion - Cllr Darren Sanders - whose **portfolio** would be renamed "Cabinet Member for Housing and Homelessness" to reflect this

Heritage Champion - Councillor Lee Hunt

The Leader requested that a report be brought to a future Cabinet meeting regarding the roles of Champions. There would then be further consideration of the vacant roles of Third Sector and City of Service Champions.

37. Discharge to Assess Unit at Harry Sotnick House (AI 8)

Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson, as Leader, wished to record the Cabinet's gratitude to all city council workers in the care sector and those working in health and those in the NHS who cared for residents during the Covid-19 crisis in the most challenging of circumstances and he and Cllr Winnington as the Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Social Care had written to all the city's care homes and domiciliary care providers to thank all their staff.

Andy Biddle, Assistant Director Adult Social Care presented the report which detailed the local response at each stage of national guidance, as well as setting out the plans for responding to a potential second peak of the Coronavirus. Discharge beds would be made available in Harry Sotnick House to be an isolation assessment unit, with further detailed financial analysis needing to come back to Cabinet.

Councillor Winnington stressed the importance of these plans in the wake of government policy and a future inquiry into how discharge arrangements had been handled. The discharge unit represented a statement of intent for preparedness by the council.

DECISIONS - The Cabinet:

- (1) Endorsed the continued operation of the 20 bedded 14 Day isolation unit in the HSH Gun Wharf Unit, recognising that this is dependent on continued funding from the temporary NHS Hospital Discharge Scheme.**
- (2) Endorsed the expansion of the unit by a further 26 beds for D2A should there be a need as a consequence of a second COVID-19 peak, recognising that this will be dependent on additional funding from the temporary NHS Hospital Discharge Scheme.**
- (3) Endorsed continued work to develop plans to transition the 20 Gun Wharf COVID beds to a mainstream Discharge to Assess unit, recognising that this would be part of a wider system change. It should also be acknowledged that this will require a more detailed financial appraisal, together with a retargeting of existing funding sources and potentially financial contributions from the wider health and care system partners; to ensure it is financially sustainable in the longer term. A further report will be presented to Cabinet once the final costings and funding sources have been identified in order to seek formal agreement to establish the unit.**

38. Transport Recovery Plan (AI 9)

Hayley Trower, Air Quality Lead for Transport, presented the report which linked with the Local Transport Plan 4 (subject of next item) and the government's wish for the local authority to provide more space for residents to move around the city.

Councillor Lynne Stagg, Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation, paid tribute to the hard work of officers in making the submission to the Department for Transport, which had attracted extra funding due to the high quality of the bid. She commended the report which showed a wide range of connectivity schemes, with this only being the first part of the scheme and an award of an extra £900k had been announced the day before.

DECISIONS - Cabinet:

- (1) Approved the strategic direction to PCC's Covid-19 transport response as set out in the draft Transport Recovery Plan;**

- (2) Approved the delivery of the proposed temporary measures, and process for prioritising further measures as set out in the draft Transport Recovery Plan;**
- (3) Noted that the measures proposed within the draft Transport Recovery Plan are intended as temporary measures to be implemented quickly in response to public health concerns and to support the city's economic recovery. Therefore proposals will not be subject to the usual public consultation process prior to implementation;**
- (4) Noted that proposals in the draft Transport Recovery Plan are conditional upon sufficient funding being provided secured through government's Emergency Active Travel Fund;**
- (5) Gave delegated authority to the Assistant Director for Transport to amend the draft Transport Recovery Plan in line with the recommendations of Cabinet and in relation to the agenda item on LTP4 for this decision meeting.**

39. Local Transport Plan LTP4 (AI 10)

Felicity Tidbury, Assistant Director Transport, presented the report and updated on the work that had taken place at workshops to shape the revised draft vision and development of the 20 policies (listed in section 5 of the report). A user-friendly version of the document would be launched for a public consultation exercise to take place from September.

Councillor Lynne Stagg, Cabinet Member for Traffic & Transportation, paid credit to all the hard work by officers in Transport and Communications, with the forthcoming launch of 'Travel Portsmouth' on the Council's website and the links to the Local Cycling and Walking Infrastructure Plan. The interactive map heralded a better connected city.

Councillor Winnington, as Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Social Care, cited the importance of the links to public health and encouraged everyone to get involved in the consultation exercise.

DECISION: Cabinet approved the content of the draft Portsmouth Local Transport Plan 4 strategy for statutory consultation.

40. Waste Collections and Disposal Infrastructure (information report) (AI 11)

Colette Hill, Assistant Director of Neighbourhoods, presented this update report on all the work taking pace to help improve recycling rates, reporting back on the food waste trial, plans to include food waste collections making the collection fleet greener and investigating an anaerobic digestion plant.

Councillor Dave Ashmore, as Cabinet Member for Environment and Climate Change, thanked the officers for their hard work which showed continued improvement in bringing forward green initiatives throughout the city.

Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson also welcomed the report and the ambition to collect food waste from all properties, as well as the regional work on the anaerobic digestion plant.

The Cabinet noted the information report.

41. Supporting rough sleepers and the hidden homeless: options for the way forward (AI 12)

The Leader reordered the agenda to allow this item to be taken earlier for Councillor Corkery's attendance.

Paul Fielding, Assistant Director of Housing, introduced the report, explaining the measures that had been taken during the pandemic and the interim plan for the way forward and the necessity of another report to Cabinet on the financial commitment. He wished to thank the hard work of all involved, including the Ibis hotels, Two Saints and the volunteers.

Councillor Cal Corkery, Labour Spokesperson for Housing, made a deputation - this is not minuted in full; the meeting was livestreamed and can be viewed here:

<https://livestream.com/accounts/14063785/full-cabinet-14jul2020>

Cllr Corkery also wished to thank all involved in the provision of homeless services to the vulnerable across the Council, external providers and volunteers, who had aided approximately 200 people find accommodation during Lockdown. Going forward there was the need to focus on the multiple and complex needs of these individuals, referencing the "Housing First" approach, and looking at long term accommodation.

Councillor Vernon-Jackson, as Leader, reported that the anticipated government funding had not all been forthcoming, putting pressure on the Council's budget.

Paul Fielding then read out the written deputation from Martin Silman, Chair of the Portsmouth & District Private Landlords Association which commended the work to house rough sleepers over the last few months, but raised some concerns regarding placement of tenants in the private rented sector Houses in Multiple Occupation rather than shared smaller units, and sought further clarification on government funding.

Councillor Sanders, as Cabinet Member for Housing (encompassing homelessness) stressed the need to look at all sectors, but thanked the deputations for the points they raised. He felt this was an opportunity to secure the future of people off the streets and the government wants to co-produce these plans going forward. Cllr Sanders was very proud of the collaborative hard work undertaken by council staff, the volunteers, hostels

and police. The Housing First approach had been considered but it was most important to treat rough sleepers as individuals. An ambitious approach was being taken to tackle homelessness and request that the government change benefit rules and help local authorities in dealing with the on-going reasons for homelessness.

Councillor Winnington, as Cabinet Member for Health, Wellbeing and Social Care, had been pleased by the screening and healthcare support offered to those using the hotels, some of whom had not accessed these services for years. He commended the positive services provided which had been shared with the Health & Wellbeing Board, GPs and schools.

DECISIONS:

- (1) Cabinet noted the provision in place prior to the COVID-19 crisis**
- (2) Cabinet commended the remarkable efforts of the local authority and partners to meet the call from government to provide safe and secure accommodation for rough sleepers and thank the wide range of public services, the voluntary sector, the local communities, members, officers and the Accor Hotel group & the local hotel management team in continuing to support the emergency provision in place**
- (3) Cabinet noted the learning to be used to underpin the solutions moving forward**
- (4) Cabinet noted the emergent MHCLG funding announcements for the interim and long term plan and the work with the MHCLG to co-produce the interim and long-term plan.**
- (5) Cabinet approved the interim plan subject to funding being made available, to last up to 12 months from the end of August 2020 and which includes these elements:**
 - i. Use Private Rented Accommodation and purchased/sub-leased property at Local Housing Allowance rents for those who need only financial support**
 - ii. Use HMOs through the HMO housing organisation for suitable for a private rental tenancy provided floating support is available.**
 - iii. Use a hotel or accommodation block for those who need intensive onsite support that can best be provided in such a setting alongside security.**
 - iv. Use no more than 18 spaces between Kingston Point and Hope House as the final accommodation option for those not in the above categories. This will be**

accompanied by intensive support, boundaries and ways to deal with antisocial behaviour.

- (6) Cabinet noted the resourcing commitment to implement the interim plan and endorse that the Assistant Director of Housing is asked temporarily to focus on the delivery of the plans, alongside the cross-party and multi-agency Portsmouth City Rough Sleeping Partnership Group ("The Partnership Group") to implement the plans.**
- (7) Cabinet recognised that the potential cost of the interim plan is circa. £2.5m and that the Council are working with MHCLG to prepare a bid to the national fund made available for this purpose amounting to £105m, in the event that there remains a shortfall between estimated costs and funding identified, a further report will be prepared for Cabinet to consider prior to entering into any additional financial commitment .**
- (8) Cabinet therefore delegated authority to the Assistant Director of Housing, working with the S151 Officer, to submit a bid for the funding to support emergency, interim and long-term accommodation through the mechanism identified in the letter from MHCLG on 24th June 2020 (Appendix 3).**
- (9) Cabinet agreed the following as principles for the long-term plan:**
 - i. All those in the interim accommodation to be supported to find move on accommodation and given the opportunity not to return to rough sleeping.**
 - ii. Accommodation first, not accommodation only approach, with support levels tailored to individuals.**
 - iii. Developing the accommodation and support model to provide learning and work opportunities.**
 - iv. A range of accommodation and support ideally located in Portsmouth, based on Government's desire to build, buy and rent homes.**
 - v. A financially sustainable model.**
 - vi. An approach that provides accommodation and support into sustainable housing but also supports the prevention of homelessness and those who remain on the streets.**
 - vii. Evidenced based using all the learning and data available to create solutions.**
- (10) Cabinet agreed to ask Government to help it overcome key barriers that may impact on the long term plan, including:**
 - i. Automatically paying Universal Credit to landlords taking part**

- ii. **Making sure payments cover the full cost of rent or Local Housing Allowance, whichever is higher**
- iii. **Suspend the rule that means under-35s claim at a single room rate**
- iv. **Work with the City Council to devise plans to help future rough sleepers and to prevent homelessness**
- v. **Assist in helping the city house those on the waiting list and the homeless the City Council has statutory duties towards.**

(11) **Cabinet requested the Portsmouth City Rough Sleeping Partnership Group to develop the long term plan, based on these principles, as outlined in the report.**

(12) **Cabinet approved that this report forms the basis of the jointly produced plan with MHCLG for exiting the current approach both in the interim and long-term.**

42. Covid-19 - road to recovery and plans for the future (AI 13)

David Williams, Chief Executive, presented his report which set out the impacts had been most severe in these traumatic times and how the Council was responding. The Coronavirus infection rate was currently relatively low in the city and work was continuing to try to ensure there were clear messages on the way forward. The clear investment in partnership working had helped to ensure that most services were now back up and running, with others needing to be redesigned. The engagement work across the community had been very positive.

Councillor Steve Pitt, as Deputy Leader, wished to thank all the officers who had done so much extra work to respond to the unprecedented challenges brought about by the pandemic. He also acknowledged the lost lives and the support needed by the bereaved.

As the Cabinet Member for Culture, Leisure & Economic Development, Cllr Pitt also gave credit to the Economic Development team headed by Ian Maguire and Mark Pembleton, working with the skills team and supporting local businesses and charities with advice on the government's business grants, which had received outstanding feedback and was seen as best practice by the Local Enterprise Partnership. He also thanked Matt Willis and the Revenue and Benefits team for their involvement. This had enabled the opening of the high streets and in turn the hospitality sector and development of the arts trail. Shaping Portsmouth had also been instrumental in supporting those business who did not meet the government grant criteria. The "Go Shop, Go Eat, Go Safe, Go Local" campaign was also being used by other local authorities. There was also work taking place with the Education

department to ensure access to devices by pupils. The voluntary and community sector work harnessed at the HIVE had been outstanding, to ensure that no one who needed food had gone without, as well as arranging prescription deliveries, dog walking and gardening for shielded residents. Cllr Pitt also welcomed the cross-party work on the HIVE committee and the well-being work with Solent NHS and partnership work with the University of Portsmouth and HM Naval Base. The emerging Vision for the City would reflect the impact of Covid-19. Whilst the £12m emergency funding had been welcome campaigning for additional government funding to fill the gap of £20m needed to be maintained.

DECISIONS - Cabinet:

- (1) Expressed its condolences to those that have lost loved ones, and its huge appreciation to the many agencies and individuals that have responded so selflessly and effectively to the Covid-19 pandemic.**
- (2) Agreed the process for developing the Vision for the City and alignment with its own priorities, outlined in Section 5 of the report.**

43. Financial Impact of Covid-19 Pandemic (AI 14)

Chris Ward, Director of Finance & Resources (Section 151 Officer) presented his report and highlighted the need to adopt a financial strategy to deal with the £20m shortfall. £5m contingency had been used and £5m earmarked for spend to save as some capital schemes would need to be put on hold in the meantime. He was expecting to hear more from the government in the next few days to provide greater clarity on the extent of the shortfall.

Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson, as Leader, and Councillor Pitt as Deputy Leader, spoke of their concern of the severe impact of the shortfall if further funding was not forthcoming from the government and there would be the need to be responsible in budgeting but their priority was to protect services.

DECISIONS:

- 1) The financial strategy described in Section 8 of the report was approved**
- 2) A further report be brought to a future meeting of the Cabinet to propose a detailed plan for placing certain Capital Spending plans "on hold" which will remain "on hold" until the overall financial impact on the Council is known with reasonable certainty**
- 3) Cabinet noted that the plan to place Capital Spending "on hold" is a plan only, and any cancellation of Capital Schemes would only be invoked in the event that the Council needs to respond to a forecast financial impact of the magnitude set out in this report.**

44. UK Municipal Bonds Agency Framework Agreement (AI 15)

Chris Ward, Director of Finance & Resources (Section 151 Officer), presented his report, which set out another source of borrowing for the Council.

Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson, as Leader, commented that this would be a sensible approach with lower interest rates for Council borrowing. Councillor Hugh Mason was also supportive of this a way to challenge public loans rates with the liability limited to the local authority's proportion of loan.

RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL:

- (a) That the Council enter into a framework agreement with the UK Municipal Bonds Agency;**
- (b) That the City Solicitor (Monitoring Officer) and the Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer) be given delegated authority to sign the Framework Agreement and the Certificate of Approval confirming that:**
 - (1) the Council has the power to enter into the Framework Agreement and to perform its obligations under it;**
 - (2) the Council has approved the entering into of the Framework Agreement and the proportional guarantee;**
 - (3) all the necessary authorisations have been obtained and decision making procedures followed and completed to enable the Council to enter into the Framework Agreement and the proportional guarantee.**

45. Exclusion of Press and Public (AI 16)

DECISION: That, under the provisions of Section 100A of the Local Government Act, 1972 as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) Act, 1985, the press and public be excluded for the consideration of the following item on the grounds that the report(s) contain information defined as exempt in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act, 1972 - Appendix A, Board of Composition of PCC Companies.

The confidentiality of Appendix A only of the report was upheld, and members agreed to discuss the item in public but not make reference to the confidential information during the meeting.

46. Board Composition of Portsmouth City Council Companies (AI 17)

Peter Baulf, City Solicitor, presented this report which set out clear advice on company structures. Councillor Winnington endorsed the report which had been due to be considered in March and he felt this would make Council owned companies stronger. Councillor Pitt thanked Sophie Mallon and the Legal team for their work on this report.

DECISIONS - The Cabinet agreed that:

(1) The City Solicitor prepares and drafts a protocol (drawn from best practice and expert advice - referred to at Appendix A and Appendix D) approved by the Governance and Audit Committee as a reference and guide for the overall corporate governance structure (i.e. company structure and board composition) relating to PCC owned companies and incorporated within the PCC's constitution.

(2) In accordance with the protocol at Appendix A, that the following be approved in respect of the Ravelin Group companies:

(i) A shareholder committee is established and is responsible for the oversight of the Ravelin Group companies and all other future company subsidiaries (where relevant).

(ii) The Ravelin Group Shareholder Committee and draft terms of reference set out in detail in Appendix B are approved.

(iii) Following the approval of the establishment of the Ravelin Group shareholder committee the previous delegations as contained within the cabinet decision meeting dated 26 February 2019 shall cease and the shareholder committee shall become the sole body exercising the shareholder functions of Ravelin Group companies.

(iv) Any amendments to finalise the corporate structure of the Ravelin Group and all relevant subsidiaries required to maximise the tax efficiency of the Ravelin Group and any other PCC companies is delegated to the City Solicitor in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the S.151 Officer.

The meeting concluded at 2.15 pm.

Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson CBE
Leader of the Council