

DECISIONS of the meeting of the Cabinet held on Tuesday 5 March 2024 at 2 pm at the Guildhall, Portsmouth

Present

Councillor Steve Pitt (in the Chair)

Suzy Horton
Dave Ashmore
Kimberly Barrett
Ian Holder
Hugh Mason
Darren Sanders

24. Apologies for Absence (AI 1)

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Lee Hunt, Gerald Vernon-Jackson and Matthew Winnington. Members agreed to consider agenda item 9 last to accommodate a conflicting commitment. For ease of reference the minutes will be kept in the original order.

25. Declarations of Interests (AI 2)

There were no declarations of interest.

26. Record of previous decision meeting - 6 February 2024 (AI 3)

The record of the previous decision meeting held on 6 February 2024 was agreed as a correct record.

27. Tipner West and Horsea Island East Regeneration (AI 4)

Tom Southall, Assistant Director, Economy, Planning & Transport (Property & Investment), introduced the report. He highlighted that the principles mentioned in the second recommendation were those that were agreed by Full Council in October 2023. The remainder of the report gave an update on actions taken since the Full Council meetings of November and December 2023. There were several ongoing issues to be resolved and more reports were likely this year.

Councillor Pitt said members were advised when signing off the overarching objective that it was important to link it as one concept with the seven principles. Meanwhile, work was ongoing and the council was following the critical path that was aligned with the Local Plan. Members said that at this stage they could look forward with confidence to a viable solution for Tipner West and looked forward to a manufacturing future for a manufacturing city.

DECISIONS

The Cabinet

- 1. Approved the revised Overarching Project Objective as set out in this report, appendix A.**
- 2. Confirmed the 7 principles as set out in this report, appendix B.**
- 3. Noted the update from the project team in relation to actions taken and planned.**
- 4. Referred the report to Full Council to note.**

28. Civic Offices Regeneration (AI 5)

Natasha Edmunds, Director of Corporate Services, introduced the report.

Councillor Pitt thanked Ms Edmunds for the update. The current building did not benefit residents and he looked forward to seeing progress on its regeneration.

DECISION

The Cabinet noted the report.

29. Social Value Annual Report (AI 6)

Natasha Edmunds, Director of Corporate Services, introduced the report.

Councillor Horton, Cabinet Member for Children, Families & Education, said that social value had gone from a concept to a tangible report. Yesterday she had attended a meeting about employment and young people with learning disabilities and difficulties and many of the organisations listed in the report were mentioned; they were part of "Team Portsmouth." Hearing how individual lives were affected showed the importance of social value which was going from strength to strength. Members were glad to hear that people were talking about the Portsmouth Model.

DECISION

The Cabinet noted the report.

30. Equality, Diversity and Inclusion Strategy (AI 7)

Lee Todd, Head of Marketing, Communications & Engagement, introduced the report.

Members said with regard to affordability, equality, diversity and inclusion (EDI) was embedded in the way the council worked and all its services. It had a duty of care and a commitment so people could be the best version of themselves. Really good and essential work was being done. Councillor Pitt mentioned the Chancellor's recent comments on councils spending money on diversity. At the recent Community Awards he saw the difference small amounts of money could make and which prevented acute and more expensive demand on services later on.

DECISION

The Cabinet approved the Equality, Diversity and Inclusion strategy 2024-2027.

31. Water Safety Management Policy (AI 8)

Claire Looney, Commissioning and Partnerships Manager, introduced the report, explaining that after several fatalities at Camber Sands in 2016 changes to legislation were expected. The changes had not materialised and the council's internal audit had shown there was no definitive guidance for water safety so it was timely to create the policy.

Members thanked all those involved in creating the policy. They particularly welcomed the educational aspect, which included the University as well as

schools, as students from inland areas may not be aware of the dangers. As an island city it was important to take water safety seriously. Members also noted the RNLI was 200 years old this month.

DECISION

The Cabinet formally adopted the Water Safety Management Policy.

32. Adult Social Care – Self-assessment preparing for inspection (AI 9)

Andy Biddle, Director of Adult Social Care, introduced the report and explained that DASS stood for Director of Adult Social Services.

Councillor Horton, speaking on behalf of Councillor Winnington, Cabinet Member for Community Wellbeing, Health & Care, who had a conflicting commitment, noted that Children's Services were well experienced in going through inspections. As long as services were not told anything they did not know inspections could be an opportunity to reflect and celebrate what they were doing well. Aspects could be selected for scrutiny with a view to improvement and an organisation that reflected on its practice was a good one. The cost of not doing things well was very high for councils. Councillor Horton had every confidence Adult Social Care would do well.

DECISIONS

The Cabinet

- 1. Noted the report and self-assessment.**
- 2. Requested the Director of Adult Social Care to develop an improvement plan for 2024/25 to address the identified areas for development in the self-assessment.**
- 3. Requested the Director of Adult Social Care to attend Cabinet with the improvement plan for note and feedback by the end of June 2024.**
- 4. Referred the self-assessment to the Health Overview & Scrutiny Panel for scrutiny.**

33. Response to Review into Systems Thinking (AI 10)

James Hill, Director of Housing, Neighbourhood & Building Services, introduced the report.

Members noted that councils were encouraged to be efficient and the report illustrated this. Systems Thinking may not be for everyone but it was about talking to people and was a way of ensuring that those who matter were considered. Members were particularly impressed that the panel had focussed on these two aspects and looked forward to Systems Thinking being expanded and developed.

DECISIONS

The Cabinet

- 1. Thanked the Panel for its work in undertaking the review and the resulting report; and**
- 2. Noted the Panel's report and recommendations as set out in Appendix A to this report, together with the officer responses to the recommendations as set out in 4.2 of this report.**

34. Provision of sanitary bins in male toilets (AI 11)

Colette Hill, Assistant Director, Neighbourhoods, introduced the report.

Members were happy for the issue to be brought to their attention and grateful to Councillor Ryan Brent for bringing the Notice of Motion at Full Council in October 2023. It showed how the council wanted inclusivity and was constantly seeking to improve life for residents. The provision of bins would give more people, particularly older residents or those with medical conditions, a greater degree of mobility and independence to move around the city. Councillor Pitt said when officers implemented the last recommendation they needed to share information on costs so businesses realised they could afford the expenditure.

DECISIONS

The Cabinet

- 1. Agreed to the provision of at least one bin with associated stickers in all male public convenience sites.**
- 2. Asked all Directorates to arrange the provision of at least one bin per site with associated stickers in all male toilets at council owned and directly operated sites.**
- 3. Requested the Economic Development team to work with Shaping Portsmouth and public service partners to influence businesses to adopt a similar approach in male toilets.**

35. North Portsea Coastal Defence Scheme Contract Authority (AI 12)

Guy Mason, Coastal and Drainage Manager (Project Director), introduced the report and confirmed that Natural England could enforce a halt on the works to protect overwintering birds.

Members said the council had worked hard to ensure homes and business were safe in the northern part of the city. The works would give housing complete protection. The area also had some very important businesses and infrastructure.

Councillor Pitt welcomed the update. He had recently visited the work around Southsea Castle (also known as "the theatre of the sea") which looked absolutely stunning. He thanked the team for their efforts.

DECISION

The Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Chief Executive in consultation with the S151 Officer to implement and deliver Phase 5 of the North Portsea Coastal Scheme and to enter into any design, construction or support contract arrangements required, subject to the maximum financial commitment from Portsmouth City Council remaining within the existing approved value of £282k, and to allow the Chief Executive to delegate - in full or part - this authority to the Director of Economy, Planning and Transport.

36. Portsmouth Health Determinants Research Collaboration (AI 13)

Matt Gummerson, Assistant Director, Strategic Intelligence & Research, introduced the report. He was confident that five years of funding could grow

the research base to help understand the inequalities described in the Public Health Annual Report. A report would be brought back with full plans when available but in the meantime he encouraged members to support the project.

Members agreed the project was good news and noted it linked up with Family Hubs and the Start for Life programme. It was great to see so many key partners in the city involved.

DECISION

The Cabinet noted the report.

37. Public Health Annual Report 2023 (AI 14)

Matt Gummerson, Assistant Director, Strategic Intelligence & Research, introduced the report.

Members thought the differences in life expectancy between the most and least deprived areas was shocking, especially considering that Portsmouth was a small city. The fact that 30% of children in Year 6 were overweight was a challenge for everyone. Matters could be worse without the work of the Public Health team. The Chair thanked the Director of Public Health for the report.

DECISION

The Cabinet noted the report.

38. Capital Strategy 2024/25-2033/34 (AI 15)

Chris Ward, Director of Finance & Resources, introduced the report, explaining that the government wanted to curb public service and commercial investments so that councils could not borrow purely for financial return.

Members noted the council was very flexible and "fleet of foot" in managing its investments and debts, unlike some other councils. Members thanked Mr Ward and his team for keeping the council solvent.

DECISIONS

The Cabinet recommended that Full Council

- 1. Approve Part I of the Capital Strategy (Capital Expenditure and Aspirations) including:**
 - a) The aspirations set out in section 6.**
- 2. Approve Part II of the Capital Strategy (Borrowing and Investing) including:**
 - a) The Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) for Debt Repayment Policy (Part II, (paragraphs 3.5 to 3.7)**
 - b) The investment indicators in Part II - Appendix 1 (Part II, paragraphs 4.15 to 4.21)**
 - c) That the Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer) will bring a report to the next Cabinet and City Council if (Part II, paragraph 4.11):**
 - (i) The Council's gross General Fund (GF) debt exceeds 400% of GF net service expenditure or**

(ii) Overall investment income and long term treasury management investments exceeds 14% of GF net service expenditure.

39. Treasury Management Policy 2024/2025 (AI 16)

Chris Ward, Director of Finance & Resources, introduced the report, explaining that the Treasury Management Policy focused on the third type of investment as described in the Capital Strategy, which showed how the council managed the investment of temporary surplus funds and how it sought to make a return before the funds had to outflow. Mr Ward outlined the assurances on how the council had proper procedures to manage risk to funds. If funds were placed with a counter party who went bust the council would lose money that was earmarked for services. The council invested its cash according to the SLY (Security, Liquidity, Yield) order of priorities. It only invested in AA sovereign accredited countries; it did not heavily expose investments to risk in any particular geographical area; it did not invest too much in one sector if there was any systemic risk; there were credit and time-based limits on individual counter party investments, usually based around credit ratings. The council sought to manage risks cohesively. Finally, there were considerations around environmental, social and governance factors.

Members agreed that the words "to be" before the word "approved" in recommendation 5.ii should be deleted. Councillor Pitt said the detailed report showed how the council managed public money.

DECISIONS

The Cabinet recommended Full Council agree

- 1. That the upper limit for principal sums invested for longer than 365 days contained in section 4.6 of the attached Treasury Management Policy Statement be approved.**
- 2. That the upper and lower limits on the maturity structure of borrowing contained in appendix 5.1 of the attached Treasury Management Policy Statement be approved.**
- 3. That the attached Treasury Management Policy Statement including the Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy for 2024/25 be approved.**
- 4. Note that there are no significant changes to the Treasury Management Policy for 2024/25 compared to 2023/24.**
- 5. As set out in section 1.5 of the Treasury Management Policy Statement, the Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer) and officers nominated by him have delegated authority to:**
 - i. invest surplus funds in accordance with the approved Annual Investment Strategy**
 - ii. borrow to finance short term cash deficits and capital payments from any reputable source within the authorised limit for external debt of £1,110m approved by the City Council on 13 February 2024**
 - iii. reschedule debt to even the maturity profile or to achieve revenue savings; and**
 - iv. to buy and sell foreign currency, and to purchase hedging instruments including forward purchases, forward options, and**

foreign exchange rate swaps to mitigate the foreign exchange risks associated with some contracts that are either priced in foreign currencies or where the price is indexed against foreign currency exchange rates.

- 6. That the Director of Finance and Resources (Section 151 Officer) has the power to delegate treasury management operations to relevant staff.**
- 7. That the Chief Executive, the Leader of the City Council and the Chair of the Governance and Audit and Standards Committee be informed of any material variances from the Treasury Management Policy when they become apparent, and that the Leader of the City Council be consulted on remedial action (paragraph 1.2.3 of Treasury Management Policy Statement).**

Councillor Pitt thanked officers for their reports and the Local Democracy Officer for their support over the year. He wished members well for the local elections.

The meeting concluded at 3 pm.

Councillor Steve Pitt
Leader of the Council