

THE "CALL IN" PERIOD FOR THIS SET OF MINUTES ENDS AT 12 NOON ON WEDNESDAY 23 MARCH 2022. MINUTE NO.119 IS NOT SUBJECT TO "CALL-IN"

CABINET

MEETING HELD AT THE TOWN HALL, BOOTLE ON THURSDAY 10TH MARCH, 2022

PRESENT: Councillor Ian Maher (in the Chair)
Councillors Atkinson, Cummins, Doyle, Fairclough,
Hardy, Lappin and Roscoe

110. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Moncur and Veidman.

111. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of any disclosable pecuniary interests or personal interests were received.

112. MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

Decision Made:

That the Minutes of the meeting held on 10 February 2022 be approved as a correct record.

113. GREEN SEFTON – SOUTHPORT GOLF LINKS INVESTMENT OPPORTUNITIES

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Operational In-House Services updating on the outcome of recent consultation and market testing exercises relating to the current condition, and potential improvements, to Southport Golf Links. It had been established there was much potential and opportunities to develop the user experience, and income generated from both the course and its build facilities for players and non-golfers alike.

The report also sought approval to tender for partner/s to develop the proposals and provide investment models to enact these for the improvements to both the course and/or the Whitehouse Café.

Decision Made:

That

- (1) the outcome of the public consultation and soft market testing exercises to date be noted;

- (2) the outline Vision for the site as set out in the report be agreed;
- (3) the concept of attracting investment in facilities at Southport Golf Links be supported as a means of delivering the above vision;
- (4) officers be authorised to formally tender for potential partner/investment in Southport Golf Links course itself, as a capital scheme, but for the Council to retain full ongoing management and operational control;
- (5) officers be authorised to formally tender for potential partner/investment in the White House café, for a medium-term lease where they would be expected to invest in the building, and then operate it fully for the agreed term and for an agreed rent;
- (6) regular updates be submitted to the Cabinet Member - Health and Well Being on progress as the process develops; and
- (7) a further report to be presented to Cabinet on the investments proposed for consideration.

Reasons for the Decision:

Southport Golf Links is a popular municipal course in the area however, participation is variable. The course operates at a surplus (generating more income than it costs to provide) but does not currently meet its income targets, including those additional targets set in 2019/20 associated with the development of a potential new driving range and other practice facilities.

The previous approach of reinvestment of income surplus to the target in the 2000's came to an end some time ago, and now the infrastructure of the course is coming to the end of its useful life – capital investment is needed to improve the course and its facilities. The course investment would also include helping to resolve drainage issues and reduce the number of days when the course is closed due to waterlogging.

The concession for the Whitehouse Café came to an end in 2013/14, and the vacant building presents an opportunity to provide a new hospitality facility for both golfers and non-golfers alike.

Recent consultation has shown both golfers and non-players alike would like to see investment in both the Whitehouse Café and on the course itself.

A soft market testing exercise undertaken in 2021 confirmed the private sector interest in working with the Council to develop the course and its facilities, and as outlined in the report, suggests significant opportunity to now tender formally to explore and understand the offers for investment in either, and/or the course and its buildings.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

If no investment in the course is undertaken, the quality of the course and facilities will continue to decline over coming years which will reduce the participation in golf (thereby not reaping the many health and well-being benefits for players), and inevitably therefore, the income generated by the course will reduce further too.

The options considered for the investment route have been explained within the report, and the recommendations are based on considering the risk assessment against these approaches.

114. HOUSING TENANCY STRATEGY 2021-26

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Economic Growth and Housing indicating that the Council had a legal duty under the Localism Act 2011 to have in place a Tenancy Strategy setting out a number of requirements that registered providers of social housing must consider when formulating their policies:

- the kinds of tenancy they grant;
- the circumstances in which they will grant a tenancy of a particular kind;
- where they grant tenancies for a certain term (a fixed term tenancy), the length of the terms; and
- the circumstances in which they will grant a further tenancy on the coming to an end of an existing tenancy.

Each Local Authority within the Liverpool City Region (LCR) published their first Tenancy Strategy during 2012. These strategies were reviewed again in 2016 and it was agreed to conduct a single review on a partnership basis, with LCR Local Authorities working together to produce a shared Tenancy Strategy. The Cabinet approved the adoption of this strategy in October 2016.

Over the previous three months the LCR authorities had been working together to refresh this document which had been developed in accordance with each individual local authority's housing needs and the report sought approval to a finalised Liverpool City Region Tenancy Strategy 2022, which would replace the previous version.

Decision Made:

That

- (1) the Liverpool City Region Tenancy Strategy 2022 be adopted;
- (2) it be noted that:

- a) a report will be taken to a future meeting of the Liverpool City Region Combined Authority for endorsement, and
- b) each of the Liverpool City Region authorities will seek approval through their individual formal decision-making processes prior to the adoption of the finalised strategy.

Reasons for the Decision:

Section 150 of the Localism Act 2011 places a statutory duty on local housing authorities to prepare and publish a tenancy strategy, and to have undertaken formal consultations in advance.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

The Council has a duty to prepare a Tenancy Strategy. The Council could produce a Tenancy Strategy independently of the other LCR authorities; however, this would be contrary to any joined-up or strategic housing plan making of the LCR. As the Tenancy Strategy seeks to influence Registered Housing Providers (RP) own approaches to tenancy management, and most RPs operate across multiple Liverpool City Region council areas, a common strategy was seen as the most advantageous approach.

115. SOCIAL HOUSING ALLOCATIONS SCHEME

The Cabinet considered the report of the Head of Economic Growth and Housing indicating that since 2012, the Council had been part of the Merseyside sub regional social housing allocations scheme known as Property Pool Plus (PPP). Following a review of the policy, which included extensive community consultation and concluded in early 2021, a final draft of the policy which updated the current version of the policy had now been agreed between all the other Liverpool City Region local authorities. Approval was sought on this final revised Allocations Policy and for the arrangements for the introduction of a new IT system to support the operation of the new policy and scheme.

A Member of the Cabinet asked questions/raised matters on the following issue:

- The budget that would be used to fund the scheme.

Decision Made:

That

- (1) the Allocations policy and scheme, as set out in Appendix B to the report, be approved;

- (2) the introduction of the new scheme be delayed until a suitable IT system is procured to support the operation of the new policy and scheme;
- (3) authority be delegated to the Head of Economic Growth and Housing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Communities and Housing, to enter into a contract with an IT system supplier following a procurement exercise for the provision of the IT system;
- (4) authority be delegated to the Head of Economic Growth and Housing to approve the financial arrangements for procuring and operating the new IT system;
- (5) recommendations (2), (3) and (4) above be subject to the Council approving a Supplementary Capital Estimate for the scheme of £65,000 funded from the Cost of Change budget;
- (6) authority be delegated to the Head of Economic Growth and Housing to enter into arrangements with the other participating local authorities (Halton, Knowsley, Liverpool and Wirral), to govern the implementation and future operation of the allocations scheme, including the appointment of a PPP Coordinator to work across all local authority areas; and
- (7) the Council be recommended to approve a Supplementary Capital Estimate for the scheme of £65,000 funded from the Cost of Change budget.

Reasons for the Decision:

In order to ensure that the Allocations Policy is in line with current legislation, case law and good practice it is necessary to update the current iteration. Cabinet authority is required to adopt a new Social Housing Allocations Policy and to approve the work and cost related to an IT system necessary to operate it.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

The alternative option would be to not approve participation in this sub-regional scheme, and under that scenario the Council would need to operate its own allocation scheme. In the short term this would require the continued use of the existing policy and therefore extend use of the existing allocation scheme and operational agreements with One Vision Housing (OVH) and Civica, the existing IT system supplier. In order to ensure that the policy in operation was up to date, the Council would need to develop its own allocations policy and scheme, and separately procure a suitable IT system with which to operate it.

However, the opportunity to take advantage of joint sub-regional operational arrangements for an allocations scheme or efficient

procurement of an improved IT system will not be possible, nor will the efficiencies that are expected to flow from these arrangements be gained.

116. TOWN DEAL: THE ENTERPRISE ARCADE

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director – Place updating on the Southport Town Deal project, The Enterprise Arcade, and presenting the preferred option for progressing the commitment of Town Deal funding for the project. The report also included a summary of the business case for submission by the Council, as accountable body, to Government on behalf of the Southport Town Deal Board.

Decision Made:

That:

- (1) the Business Case for this project be endorsed to go forward as part of the Town Deal investment package;
- (2) authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services, in consultation with the Executive Director – Place, in consultation with the Cabinet Member - Regeneration and Skills, and, the Chair of the Southport Town Deal Board, the signing and returning of the Project Documentation to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) in line with Town Deal funding deadlines, in order to trigger the release of funding and commence the project activity; and
- (3) the Council be recommended to approve a supplementary capital estimate of £1.25m funded from the Town Deal.

Reasons for the Decision:

Under the Town Deal Heads of Terms, Sefton Council is required to submit businesses cases within 12 months of the offer (by March 2022).

The preferred option for Enterprise Arcade is set out in the business case and in the Design Feasibility RIBA Stage 2 Report which will allow for the provision of 898 m² of improved floor space comprising of Crown Building* and 3 adjacent retail units on Eastbank Street, Southport.

(* the Dove Properties management suite is excluded from this initial phase 1 work but may be drawn into the proposed works subject to agreeing a release of this office with the current leaseholder).

Securing a Tenant who will act as an operating partner for the Enterprise Arcade will be integral to the long-term success of the project. Through agreeing a Property Lease, with embedded contractual obligations, the risks of ongoing financial liability for the operation and day-to-day costs of running the building will be transferred to the Tenant partner, meaning that

there will be no ongoing financial burden to the Council relative to any operating costs. The Council will continue to have responsibility for the structural integrity of the building and associated services, and provision will be made in the lease agreement for a contribution to these costs from the lessee/operator. The freehold of the building will remain with the Council as will the long-term benefit of the Town Deal funding for improvements to the asset.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

The RIBA Stage 2 report lists the alternative options considered in delivering Enterprise Arcade across 8 options differentiated by scale/levels of finish and associated cost.

The Do-Nothing option is rejected on the basis of not meeting the Core Objectives of the Project and output requirement committed within the Town Investment Plan and related Heads of Terms.

The preferred option delivers to the required level of outputs within the available budget and all associated Project Risks for this project at Design Stage 2 are addressed in the Stage 2 Design Feasibility Report.

117. CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE TRAINING - BUSINESS CASE

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director – Place updating on the Southport Town Deal project, Building Better Customer Experience, and presenting the preferred option for progressing the commitment of Town Deal funding for the project.

A Member of the Cabinet placed thanks on record to Councillors Waterfield and Halsall for their input on the matter in facilitating engagement with Southport Access for Everyone (SAFE) regarding disability awareness on this and other Town Deal projects.

Decision Made:

That

- (1) the Business Case for this project be endorsed to go forward as part of the Town Deal investment package;
- (2) authority be delegated to the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services, in consultation with Executive Director - Place and the Chair of the Southport Town Deal Board the signing and returning of the Project Documentation to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) in line with Town Deal funding deadlines, in order to trigger the release of funding and commence the project activity; and
- (3) the fact that the Executive Director - Place in consultation with the Cabinet Member – Regeneration and Skills and Section 151 Officer

will be requested to approve a supplementary revenue estimate of £200,000, as per the Financial Procedure Rules, to be fully funded by the Town Deal, be noted.

Reasons for the Decision:

Under the Town Deal Heads of Terms, Sefton Council is required to submit business cases within 12 months of the initial offer (i.e. by March 2022).

The preferred option for Building Better Customer Experience is set out in the business case and reflects an understanding of the needs of the Town in order to make key improvements in the quality of the local workforce to underpin the transformation of the Town.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

The Do-Nothing option has been rejected on the basis that we have recognised there are key issues connected with the skills and aptitudes of the local workforce which are necessary to address in order to achieve the level of transformation we envisage in the Town Deal Investment Plan, with increased visitor footfall, increased length of stay and return visit and higher levels of satisfaction in key attractions, leisure facilities, catering and hospitality settings.

118. TRANSFORMATIONS DE SOUTHPORT - BUSINESS CASE

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director – Place that provided an update on the Southport Town Deal project, *Les Transformations de Southport*, and presented the preferred option for progressing the commitment of Town Deal funding for the project. The report also included the business case for the project for submission by the Council, as the accountable body, to Government on behalf of the Town Deal Board.

Decision Made:

That

- (1) the proposals for committing the Town Deal funding for delivery of the first phase of the project be approved;
- (2) the business case for the project be agreed and be submitted to Government on behalf of the Town Deal Board;
- (3) the agreement and return of the Project Documentation to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) be delegated to the Chief Executive and the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services, in consultation with the Executive Director - Place and the Cabinet Member - Regeneration and Skills and the Cabinet Member - Locality

Services, on behalf of the Town Deal Board and in line with Town Deal funding deadlines; and

- (4) the Council be recommended to approve a supplementary capital estimate of £2.75m funded from the annual transportation capital programme (£0.25m), for the development of the scheme, and the Town Deal (£2.5m) for the delivery of the first phase of the project.

Reasons for the Decision:

Under the Town Deal Heads of Terms, Sefton Council is required to submit business cases within 12 months of the offer (by March 2022). The business case for the *Les Transformations de Southport* project has been developed in accordance with the guidance provided for Town Deal projects and takes account of consultation feedback and the results of previous studies in recommending the first phase of delivery for the project. The business case needs to be approved for the submission to be made to the Government to facilitate the provision of the grant funding.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Failing to complete and agree the business case would risk losing the funding so that is not an acceptable option.

A range of different transport interventions were considered for inclusion in the project as part of the Town Deal process and a project focussed on improving movement, access and connectivity across the town was agreed by the Town Deal Board for inclusion in the Town Investment Plan.

119. LOCAL GOVERNMENT ASSOCIATION PEER REVIEW REVISIT

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services seeking endorsement for a Peer revisit to take place in relation to the 2018 Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Assessment.

Decision Made:

That the LGA's intention to undertake a Peer Review Revisit in April 2022 be welcomed.

Reasons for the Decision:

Peer Reviews are a proven tool for sector-led improvement and the Council has always been open to learning from others and sharing good practice. The peer challenge that took place in 2018 provided external recognition of the things it believed the Council was doing well, highlighted where the Council could learn from other councils considering best practice elsewhere and recommended several key actions.

In January 2019 the Cabinet considered and agreed an action plan responding to the Peer Review Team's recommendations and in March 2020 the Cabinet received a progress update.

The report sought to keep Members informed of the LGA peers revisit intentions to assess progress against their recommendations.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Not applicable.

120. ANNUAL HEALTH AND SAFETY REPORT

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services that provided assurance on the progress made to implement the Council's Health and Safety policy during the 2020/21 financial year.

A Member of the Cabinet commended the work of the Council's Health and Safety Team during the Covid-19 pandemic.

Decision Made:

That the progress on implementing the Council's Corporate Health and Safety Policy for the 2020/21 financial year be noted.

Reasons for the Decision:

The annual report provides assurance to the Cabinet, which has strategic responsibility for employee health and safety, that there is continued progress to implement and enhance an effective health and safety system across the Council.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.

121. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT 2021/22 TO 2024/25 AND FRAMEWORK FOR CHANGE 2020 - REVENUE AND CAPITAL BUDGET UPDATE 2021/22 INCLUDING THE FINANCIAL IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON THE 2021/22 BUDGET - MARCH UPDATE

The Cabinet considered the report of the Executive Director of Corporate Resources and Customer Services that advised of:

1. The current financial implications of COVID-19 on the 2021/22 Budget.
2. The current position relating to the 2021/22 revenue budget.
3. The current forecast on Council Tax and Business Rates collection for 2021/22.

4. The monitoring position of the Council's capital programme to the end of January 2022:
 - The forecast expenditure to year end.
 - Variations against the approved budgets and an explanation of those variations for consideration by Members.
 - Updates to spending profiles and proposed amendments to capital budgets necessary to ensure the efficient delivery of capital projects were also presented for approval.

Decision Made:

That

A. in respect of the Revenue Budget:

- (1) the current financial implications of COVID-19 on the 2021/22 Budget together with the key issues that will influence the final position be noted;
- (2) the current position relating to the 2021/22 revenue budget be noted;
- (3) the financial risks associated with the delivery of the 2021/22 revenue budget be recognised and that the forecast outturn position will continue to be reviewed to ensure a balanced forecast outturn position and financial sustainability can be achieved be acknowledged;
- (4) the fact that a grant offer from the Rural Payments Agency for Countryside Stewardship Higher Tier funding has now been formally accepted and a fully funded revenue estimate of £0.483m and a fully funded capital estimate of £0.012m have been approved in accordance with the Council's Financial Procedure Rules be noted;

B. in respect of the Capital Programme:

- (5) the spending profiles across financial years for the approved capital programme, as set out at paragraph 7.1 of the report, be noted;
- (6) the latest capital expenditure position as at 31 January 2022 of £22.093m, as set out at paragraph 6.4 of the report; the latest full year forecast is £41.761m, as set out at paragraph 7.6 of the report, be noted;
- (7) the explanations of variances to project budgets, as set out at paragraph 7.7 of the report, be noted;
- (8) a supplementary capital estimate for £0.455m, as detailed in paragraph 7.11 of the report, be approved; and

- (9) the fact that capital resources will be managed by the Executive Director Corporate Resources and Customer Services to ensure the capital programme remains fully funded and that capital funding arrangements secure the maximum financial benefit to the Council, as set out at paragraph 7.14 of the report, be noted.

Reasons for the Decision:

To ensure the Cabinet is informed of the current position in relation to the 2021/22 revenue budget, including COVID19 pressures and additional funding being made available to the Council.

To provide an updated forecast of the outturn position with regard to the collection of Council Tax and Business Rates.

To keep Members informed of the progress of the Capital Programme against the profiled budget for 2021/22 and agreed allocations for future years.

To progress any changes that are required in order to maintain a relevant and accurate budget profile necessary for effective monitoring of the Capital Programme.

To approve any updates to funding resources so that they can be applied to capital schemes in the delivery of the Council's overall capital strategy.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

Not applicable.

122. INTEGRATED CARE BOARD PLACE DIRECTOR

The Cabinet considered the report of the Interim Chief Personnel Officer indicating that subject to the passing of legislative proposals regarding changes to the Health and Care Bill, a new statutory post of Integrated Care Board Place Director had been created.

The post holder would report to the new Integrated Care Board for Cheshire and Merseyside when it was established on 1 July 2022.

The post holder would be responsible for the leadership, strategy, effectiveness and delivery of a range of NHS functions for integrated health and care services.

Partners in Sefton proposed that the Place Director could be a jointly accountable role to both the Integrated Care Board and the Council, with the post holder carrying on Council responsibilities alongside their accountability to the Integrated Care Board. This model would in principle enable greater integration.

Following an open and transparent competitive recruitment process, Sefton Council's Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health had been offered the role. However, in order to be able to accept the post Cabinet approval was required.

Decision Made:

That

- (1) the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health be authorised to accept the role of Director of Place;
- (2) the Executive Director of Adult Social Care and Health be authorised to continue in that substantive role whilst also discharging the role of Director of Place;
- (3) the individual employee will remain on Sefton Council terms and conditions of employment; and
- (4) the fact that there will be salary implications, although those discussions have not yet taken place, be noted.

Reasons for the Decision:

In order to secure Cabinet approval for the appointment of the Director of Place to proceed in accordance with the contents of the report.

Alternative Options Considered and Rejected:

None.