

Minutes of the **Cabinet**
of the **Test Valley Borough Council**
held in Conference Room 1, Beech Hurst, Weyhill Road, Andover SP10 3AJ
on 22 February 2023 at 5.30 pm

Attendance:

Councillor P North (Chairman)

Councillor N Adams-King (Vice-Chairman)

Councillor P Bundy
Councillor D Drew
Councillor M Flood

Councillor I Jeffrey
Councillor T Tasker

Also in attendance

Councillor I Andersen
Councillor D Baverstock
Councillor J Burnage

Councillor N Gwynne
Councillor J Parker

461

Apologies

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor A Johnston.

462

Public Participation

There was no public participation.

463

Declarations of Interest

Councillor Tasker declared a Personal Interest in item 15 - Valley Housing Business Plan as her husband is a Director of Valley Housing Limited. She left the meeting prior to the consideration of that item.

464

Urgent Items

There were no urgent items.

465

Minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2023

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 18 January 2023 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

466 **Recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee - None**

There were no recommendations to consider from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

467 **Interim Rights under the Electronic Communications Code**

Consideration was given to the report of the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder which considered a request on behalf of EE Limited and Hutchinson 3G seeking agreement to carry out survey work at East Portway in order to establish whether the site would be suitable for the installation of a telecommunications mast.

The request would allow a survey to be undertaken in accordance with the agreement and nothing further.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

1. **That an access agreement be entered into with EE Limited and Hutchinson 3G Limited to allow access to the site within this report, if a formal Notice is submitted.**
2. **That the Head of Property and Asset Management and Head of Legal and Democratic Services be given authority to settle the final form of the Agreement.**

468 **Resourcing for Impacts of the Environment Act and Biodiversity Net Gain (BNG)**

Consideration was given to the report of the Planning Portfolio Holder which sought funding for additional resource required by the Council to accommodate the increased workload resulting from the introduction of Biodiversity Net gain requirements under the provisions of the Environment Act 2021.

The Act made provisions for targets, plans and policies from improving the natural environment with a number of new statutory requirements for local authorities. Additional resource would allow the Council to fulfil new statutory duties, corporate responsibilities and opportunities relating to Biodiversity net gain.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

That the budget requirement, as set out in section 8 of the report, be approved.

469

King John's House Grant 2023/24

Consideration was given to the report of the Community, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder outlining details of the grant provided to King John's House and proposals for the financial year 2023/24.

The Council has provided grant funding to support King John's House to support them in developing a regional tourism market in active collaboration with the Visitor Information Centre in Romsey to meet the needs of the whole borough.

During 2023 a review of tourism would be undertaken and therefore it was proposed to extend the grant funding to King John's House for a further year to allow information to be fed-in to the review process which would develop the tourism offer for Test Valley.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

- 1. That the King John's House grant of £43,634 be extended for one year to cover 2023-24.**
- 2. That authority be given to the Head of Finance and Revenues to agree up to a 5% inflationary rise on the grant for 2023/24 in discussion with King John's House.**

470

Capital Strategy 2022/23 to 2027/28

Consideration was given to the report of the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder which set out the framework within which all Council capital expenditure is approved, monitored and financed. The CIPFA Prudential Code requires that it be updated annually.

The report provided an update of the existing Capital Strategy and included forecast changes to its timescale and total cost.

The approval of a Capital Strategy is an annual requirement under the revised CIPFA Prudential Code 2021. The Code requires that councils have in place a strategy that sets out the long term context in which capital expenditure and investment decisions are made, giving due consideration to both risk and reward and the impact resulting from those decisions.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet agreed to the following:

Recommended to Council:

That the Capital Strategy 2022/23 to 2027/28 be approved.

471 **Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2023/24**

Consideration was given to the report of the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder which presented the Treasury Management and Annual Investment Strategies of the Council and had been produced in accordance with the latest statutory requirements and relevant codes of practice.

The report and annexes demonstrated how the Council plans to minimise its risks to the current economic climate by stipulating creditworthiness requirements on lenders and limiting the maximum amount that can be invested with any counterparty at any one time.

Councillor Flood proposed an alteration to the wording of recommendation 2 to change the paragraph reference from 4.4 to 3.5. The meeting's consent was signalled without discussion.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet agreed to the following:

Recommended to Council:

1. **That the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and the Annual Investment Strategy for 2023/24, as set out in the report, be approved.**
2. **That the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) policy, as shown in paragraph 3.5 in the report, be approved.**
3. **That the Prudential Indicators, as set out in Annex 1 to the report, be approved.**

472 **Capital Programme Update - 2022/23 to 2024/25**

Consideration was given to the report of the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder which updated Councillors on the progress of the existing 2022/23 Capital Programme and included forecast changes to its timescale and total cost.

The report also provided an update on new projects to be added to the Capital Programme and one project to be removed.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet agreed to the following:

Recommended to Council:

That the revised estimates and financing for the 2022/23 to 2024/25 Capital Programme as shown in the Annex to the report, be approved.

473 **Revenue Budget and Council Tax Proposals 2023/24**

Consideration was given to the report of the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder which presented the proposals for the final Revenue Budget and Council Tax for the financial year 2023/24.

The report took into account the previous budget information and options for changes in service delivery that were presented to the Cabinet in October 2022 and January 2023.

The report was the culmination of a process that started in the summer of 2022. It presented the savings and additional income that has been identified to enable the Council to propose a balanced budget for 2023/24.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet agreed to the following:

Recommended to Council:

1. That the Forecast for 2022/23, as set out in Column 3 of Annex 1 to the report, be noted.
2. That the Income Generation Proposals, Savings Options and Revenue Pressures, as set out in Annexes 2 – 4 of the report, be approved.
3. That the transfers to or from reserves, as detailed in paragraph 4.35 in the report, be approved.
4. That subject to recommendations 2 and 3 above and taking due regard of the Head of Finance and Revenues' comments in Annex 8 to the report, the budget for 2023/24, as set out in Column 6 of Annex 1 to the report, be approved.
5. That subject to recommendations 2, 3 and 4 above, the revenue estimates for each Service, contained in Annex 7 to the report, be approved.
6. That a Council Tax Requirement for 2023/24 of £10,585,319 be approved.
7. That a Special Expenses Levy of £343,667 be made in respect of the area of Andover to cover the cost of providing burial grounds, sports grounds and playgrounds, as set out in Annex 9, to the report.
8. That a general precept of £8,258,235 be levied for the year 2023/24.
9. That the Medium Term Forecast, contained in Annex 6 to the report, be noted.
10. That a Band D Council Tax excluding Parishes and Special Expenses of £158.91 in 2023/24 be approved.

474

Exclusion of the Public

Resolved:

That, pursuant to Regulation 4 of the Local Authorities (Executive Arrangements) (Meetings and Access to Information) (England) Regulations 2012, the public be excluded from the meeting for the consideration of the following report on the following matters on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the following Paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, indicated below. The public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information for the reason given below:

Valley Housing Matters

Paragraph 3

It is considered that this report contains exempt information within the meaning of paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended. It is further considered that the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information because the information relates to the financial or business affairs of both the Council and third parties.

475

Valley Housing Business Plan

Councillor Tasker left the meeting prior to the consideration of this item.

Consideration was given to a report of the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder in respect of the Valley Housing Business Plan.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

That the Valley Housing Ltd Business Plan, attached as an Annex to the report, be approved.

(The meeting terminated at 6.09 pm)