

Minutes of the **Cabinet**
of the **Test Valley Borough Council**
held in Conference Room 1, Beech Hurst, Weyhill Road, Andover
on 28 February 2024 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 A Johnston
Councillor N Lodge
Councillor T Swain

Also in attendance
Councillor I Andersen
Councillor Z Brooks

Councillor L Gregori
Councillor J Parker

448

Apologies

There were no apologies for absence.

449

Public Participation

There was no public participation.

450

Declarations of Interest

There were no declarations of interest.

451

Urgent Items

There were no urgent items.

452

Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 31 January 2024 were proposed by Councillor Adams-King and seconded by Councillor Flood.

Resolved:

That the minutes of the meeting held on 31 January 2024 be confirmed and signed as a correct record.

453 **Recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee:**
None

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

454 **Corporate Equality Objectives**

Consideration was given to a report of Community, Leisure and Tourism (including Diversity and Inclusion) Portfolio Holder which presented a new set of draft Corporate Equality Objectives.

The objectives had been developed by drawing upon learning from the extensive community engagement undertaken to develop the Council's corporate priorities and supported by engagement with staff. The four new objectives had been designed to be inward and outward facing, accessible, meaningful and measurable.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, the recommendations were proposed by Councillor Swain, seconded by Councillor Phil North and Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

That the Corporate Equality Objectives, set out at paragraph 3.1 of the report, be approved.

455 **Member Champion Appointment**

Consideration was given to a report of the leader which provided an update on the Council's Member Champions Scheme and proposed the appointment of two champions for the remainder of 2024/25.

Following review of the scheme in light of the Council's corporate priorities, two areas of specialism were identified which provided ongoing support to communities in the borough. Consideration of further areas of focus would be undertaken with a view to appointments being made in 2024/25.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, the recommendation was proposed by Councillor P North, seconded by Councillor Adams-King and Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

That the Councillors, as set out below, be appointed to the following Member Champions roles for 2023/24.

Armed Forces

Community Safety and Resilience

Councillor I Jeffrey

Councillor P Lashbrook

Revenue Budget and Council Tax Proposals 2024/25

Consideration was given to a report of the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder which presented the proposals for the final Revenue Budget and Council Tax for the financial year 2024/25.

The report took into account the previous budget information and options for changes in service delivery that were presented to the Cabinet in October 2023 and January 2024. The report also presented the savings and additional income that had been identified to enable the Council to propose a balanced budget for 2024/25.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, the recommendations were proposed by Councillor Flood, seconded by Councillor P North and Cabinet agreed to the following:

Recommended to Council:

1. That the Forecast for 2023/24, 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 and 3 to the report, be approved.
3. That the transfers to or from reserves, as detailed in paragraph 4.34 of 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 7 to the report, the budget for 2024/25, 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 6 to the report be approved.
6. That a Council Tax Requirement for 2024/25 of £11,012,693 be approved.
7. That a Special Expenses Levy of £343,604 be made in respect of the area of Andover to cover the cost of providing burial grounds, sports grounds and playgrounds.
8. That a general precept of £8,532,991 be levied for the year 2024/25.
9. That the Medium Term Forecast, contained in Annex 5 to the report, be noted.
10. That a Band D Council Tax, excluding Parishes and Special Expenses, of £163.91 in 2024/25 be approved.

Capital Programme Update - 2023/24 to 2025/26

Consideration was given to a report of the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder which updated Councillors on the progress of the existing 2023/24 Capital Programme and included forecast changes to its timescale and total cost.

The report also provided an update on projects where the timetable had changed and on a new project to be added to the Capital Programme.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, the recommendations were proposed by Councillor Flood, seconded by Councillor P North and Cabinet agreed to the following:

Recommended to Council:

That the revised estimates and financing for the 2023/24 to 2025/26 Capital Programme, as shown in the Annex to the report, be approved.

458

Capital Strategy Update 2023/24 - 2028/29

Consideration was given to a report of the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder which set out the framework within which all Council capital expenditure was approved, monitored and financed.

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 was an annual requirement under the revised CIPFA Prudential Code 2021. The Code requires that councils have in place a strategy that set 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, the recommendations were proposed by Councillor Flood, seconded by Councillor P North and Cabinet agreed to the following:

Recommended to Council:

That the Capital Strategy 2023/24 to 2028/29 be approved.

459

Small Revenue Funding 2024/25

Consideration was given to a report of the Community, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder which considered the extension of targeted funding for charitable organisations that provided services for vulnerable residents in Test Valley.

The targeted use of the funding by extending current arrangements for a further year would provide stability for those charities and allow them to continue their valuable work. A full review of the funding cycle would be undertaken during 2024/25.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, the recommendations were proposed by Councillor Swain, seconded by Councillor P North and Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

To extend the current funding to Youth in Romsey, Age Concern, King Arthur's Way Community Association and Mind, as set out in the report, for a further year.

460

King John's House Grant 2024/25

Consideration was given to a report of the Community, Leisure and Tourism Portfolio Holder which considered the extension of funding to King John's House for 2024/25.

King John's House (KJH) has a strategic action plan which outlined the steps they needed to undertake to move to a self-sustaining model. Extension of the current grant funding would enable KJH to undertake the necessary actions to enable them to become self-sustaining.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, the recommendations were proposed by Councillor Flood, seconded by Councillor P North and Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

That the King John's House grant of £48,107 be extended for one year to cover 2024/25.

461

Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2027

Consideration was given to a report of the Housing and Environmental Health Portfolio Holder which presented the draft Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024-2027 and associated Delivery Plan.

The Strategy would deliver initiatives designed to meet locally identified need by empowering and supporting people to overcome their housing challenges, supporting local partnership connections to prevent and relieve homelessness, provide good quality support services and information to communities and support collaborative working to ensure rough sleeping was prevented wherever possible.

The strategy had been developed using the result of research, data analysis and a wide range of consultations with staff, service users, councillors and stakeholders.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, the recommendations were proposed by Councillor Flood, seconded by Councillor P North and Cabinet agreed to the following:

Resolved:

That the Preventing Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy 2024 – 2027 and associated Delivery Plan, shown at Annex 1 and Annex 2 to the report, be approved.

462 **Treasury Management Strategy Statement and Annual Investment Strategy 2024/25**

Consideration was given to a report of the Finance and Resources Portfolio Holder which provided 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 planned to effectively manage and control risks associated with treasury management activities, to invest prudently and to achieve optimum return on investments commensurate with proper levels of security, liquidity and protection of capital.

Having considered the options and for the reasons set out in the report, the recommendations were proposed by Councillor Flood, seconded by Councillor P North and Cabinet agreed to the following:

Recommended to Council:

- 1. That the Treasury Management Strategy Statement and the Annual Investment Strategy for 2024/25, as set out in the report, be approved.**
- 2. That the Minimum Revenue Provision policy, as shown in paragraph 4.5 of the report, be approved.**
- 3. That the Prudential Indicators, as set out in Annex 1 to the report, be approved.**

(The meeting terminated at 6.19 pm)