

Cabinet
5 November 2024

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL CABINET held on Tuesday 5 November 2024 at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE.

PRESENT: Councillors

M.Holloway (Leader of the Council)

J.Quinton (Deputy Leader of the Council)

S.Bonfante (Executive Member, Environment)

J.Broach (Executive Member, Resources)

R.Grewal (Executive Member, Planning)

G.Moore (Executive Member, Housing)

K.Thorpe (Executive Member, Governance)

ALSO Councillor
PRESENT: T.Kingsbury

OFFICIALS K.Ng, Chief Executive
PRESENT: R.Baker, Executive Director (Finance & Transformation)
G.Ramtohal, Assistant Director (Legal & Governance)
C.Cade, Governance Services Manager
R.Vega, Senior Communications Officer

302. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting on 8th October 2024 were approved as an accurate record.

303. APOLOGIES

No apologies for absence were received.

304. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND PETITIONS

No public questions or petitions were recieved

Cabinet
5 November 2024

305. ACTIONS STATUS REPORT

Cabinet noted the Action Status report.

306. NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED UNDER ITEM 17

No notifications for urgent business were received.

307. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS BY MEMBERS

No declarations of interest were received.

308. ITEMS RELATING TO THE BUDGET AND POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL

The following item relating to the Budget and Policy Framework was considered:

308.1. FP2085 Council Tax Support Scheme 2025/26

Cabinet received a report on Council Tax Support Scheme 2025/26.

Decision taken

Cabinet agreed to recommend to Full Council that the localised council tax support scheme continues in 2025/26 to help people on low/no income to receive a reduction on their council tax.

Reason for decision

The Scheme was implemented in 2013 and had had no changes since its implementation. Hertfordshire County Council and the Police had been consulted and they had raised no comments.

309. ITEMS REQUIRING KEY DECISION

The below items were considered:

309.1. FP2078 Housing Planned Works (Internal) Contracts

The decision on FP2078 Housing Planned Works (Internal) Contracts was deferred to a future meeting of Cabinet.

309.2. FP2079 Arboriculture Contract

Cabinet received the Part 1 report on the Council's arboriculture contract.

Decision taken

Cabinet
5 November 2024

Cabinet agreed to:

- a) Award the following contracts for an initial three year period (with an optional one year extension) commencing on 1st January 2025:
 - Lot 2 (Maintenance of Young Trees) is awarded to: Maydencroft Limited
 - Lot 3 (Maintenance of Woodland trees) is awarded to Maydencroft Limited
- b) Extend the current contract with Maydencroft Limited for a period of three months for maintenance of urban trees (Lot 1).
- c) That new procurement can commence for Urban Tree Maintenance (Lot 1) and be evaluated 50% on price and 50% on quality

Reason for decision

The Council is responsible for the maintenance of 30,000 trees across the Borough and manage this responsibility through a contract that includes lots for a) b) c) Maintenance of Urban Trees Maintenance of Young Trees Maintenance of Woodland Trees

The current contract expires at the end of December 2024 and following approval by the Executive Member, a new procurement was undertaken.

310. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM CABINET PANELS

The following items were considered following recommendations from the Cabinet Planning and Parking Panel held on the 17th October 2024:

310.1. FP2062 Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document

Sustainability Supplementary Planning Document was recommended to Cabinet with unanimous approval of the Cabinet Planning and Parking Panel.

During the discussion the following points were raised:

- The SPD was welcomed to encourage sustainable development and mitigate harm caused by climate change.
- It was highlighted that the proposal went beyond the requirements of legislation.

Decision taken

Cabinet agreed that:

- a) The Draft Sustainability SPD (Appendix A) be subject to public consultation for a period of six weeks; and
- b) The associated SEA/HRA Screening Report is consulted upon with the consultation bodies/nature conservation body for a period of six weeks

Reason for decision

The SPD had been prepared to provide additional information on sustainability expectations for development proposals within the borough and encourage higher standards.

Cabinet
5 November 2024

The SPD was part of the overall response to the climate change emergency declared in 2019 and aligns with the key corporate priorities of action on climate change.

310.2. North West Hatfield Masterplan Supplementary Document

Cabinet received the recommendation of the Cabinet Planning and Parking Panel where the proposals were supported unanimously.

Residents were encouraged to participate and provide feedback consultation once it was launched.

Decision taken

Cabinet agreed that the North West Hatfield Masterplan as detailed in Appendix A of the report be taken forward for public consultation for a period of six weeks.

Reason for decision

Policy SB22 of the Local Plan requires a Master Plan to be produced. The draft document had been consulted on with Hertfordshire County Council, and considered by Cabinet Planning and Parking Panel where it received unanimous support.

311. TREASURY MANAGEMENT MID-YEAR REPORT 2024/2025

Cabinet received a report on the Treasury Management Mid-Year report.

Decision taken

Cabinet noted the current treasury position and Treasury Management Indicators.

Reason for decision

The report provided Cabinet with an update to the council's performance against its Treasury Management Strategy for the year which was approved in February 2024.

312. CAPITAL BUDGET MONITORING REPORT Q2

Cabinet received a report on the Capital Budgeting Report for Quarter 2 2024/25.

Decision taken

Cabinet noted:

- a) The capital forecast outturn position
- b) The forecast position as of 30 September 2024 for funding of the capital programme and reserve balances as reflected in Table 2.
- c) The virements set out in Section 3.2.

Cabinet
5 November 2024

Reason for decision

The report presented Cabinet with the forecast out turned for capital at the end of Quarter 2 2024/25.

313. REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING REPORT Q2

Cabinet received a report on the Revenue Budget Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2024/25.

The Leader of the Opposition queried why there were variances in relation to parking which seemed to be both off street and season tickets/permits.

ACTION: A more detailed breakdown would be provided to the Leader of the Opposition.

Decision taken

Cabinet noted:

- a) The revenue forecast outturn position as at Quarter 2; and
- b) The position on debts set out in Section 5 of the report

Reason for decision

The report presented Cabinet with the forecast out turned for Revenue at the end of Quarter 2 2024/25.

314. RISK MANAGEMENT - QUARTER 2 RISK REGISTERS 2024/25

Cabinet received a report on the Risk Register for Quarter 2 2024/25.

The Executive Member for Housing provided an update the Q2 Void process.

Decision taken

Cabinet noted:

- a) The Risk Registers at Quarter 2 2024/25; and
- b) The comments and actions in respect of the strategic and serious/severe operational risks.

Reason for decision

The risk registers included indicators for risk direction identifying which risks are increasing or decreasing. Included within the report was all strategic risks and those operational risks with a residual score of serious or severe.

315. GAMBLING ACT POLICY

Cabinet received a report on Council's Gambling Act Policy.

Decision taken

The Cabinet:

- a) Noted the Welwyn Hatfield Council revised Statement of Principles under the Gambling Act for 2025-2028;
- b) Noted the results of the public consultation; and

Cabinet
5 November 2024

- c) Agreed to recommend to Full Council that the proposed changes to the Policy, as shown in Appendix 1, be approved.

Reason for decision

Licensing authorities are required under the Gambling Act to prepare and publish a statement of principles, and a policy to apply in exercising their functions under the Act and to review and revise it every 3 years.

316. Q2 PERFORMANCE MONITORING

Cabinet received a report on the performance monitoring for Q2 2024/25.

The Leader of the Opposition queried when the targets for the process of benefit claims would be met. It was explained that there had been a delay in the roll out of Revs & Bens software which would allow residents to update their details. Performance is trending in the right direction and new software will further improve processing time.

Decision taken

The Cabinet noted the report and its appendices.

Reason for decision

The report summarised the Council's quarterly performance data following the review of its performance reports.

317. ACHIEVEMENTS LIST, JULY - SEPTEMBER 2024

Cabinet received the Council's achievements List for the period July-September 2024.

During the discussion the following points were raised:

- It was highlighted that it had been a good year for Welwyn Hatfield in Anglia in Bloom. Officers and volunteers were thanked for their work.
- Officers across the Council were thanked for all their achievements.
- Officers were thanked for securing the Brownfield Release Funds.

Decision taken

Cabinet noted the Achievement List for July-September 2024.

318. SUCH OTHER BUSINESS AS, IN THE OPINION OF THE CHAIRMAN, IS OF SUFFICIENT URGENCY TO WARRANT IMMEDIATE CONSIDERATION

There were no items of urgent business.

319. EXCLUSION OF PRESS AND PUBLIC

Resolved:

That under Section 100(A)(2) and (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the press and public be now excluded from the meeting for Items 19 and 20 on

Cabinet
5 November 2024

the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of confidential or exempt information as defined in Section 100(A)(3) and Paragraph 3 (private financial or business information) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the said Act (as amended).

320. FP2078 HOUSING PLANNED WORKS (INTERNAL) CONTRACTS

Decision taken

Cabinet agreed to:

- a) Award the following contracts for an initial three year period (with an optional one year extension) commencing on 1st January 2025:
 - Lot 2 (Maintenance of Young Trees) is awarded to: Maydencroft Limited
 - Lot 3 (Maintenance of Woodland trees) is awarded to Maydencroft Limited
- b) Extend the current contract with Maydencroft Limited for a period of three months for maintenance of urban trees (Lot 1).
- c) That new procurement can commence for Urban Tree Maintenance (Lot 1) and be evaluated 50% on price and 50% on quality

321. FP2079 ARBORICULTURE CONTRACT

The Cabinet approved the recommendations as set out in the report.

322. ANY OTHER BUSINESS OF A CONFIDENTIAL OR EXEMPT NATURE AT THE DISCRETION OF THE CHAIRMAN

None.