

Cabinet  
11 July 2023

WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL

Minutes of a meeting of the WELWYN HATFIELD COUNCIL CABINET held on Tuesday 11 July 2023 at 6.30 pm in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, The Campus, Welwyn Garden City, Herts, AL8 6AE.

PRESENT: Councillors P.Zukowskyj (Leader)  
L.Chesterman (Deputy Leader)  
S.Bonfante (Executive Member Environment)  
J.Broach (Executive Member Governance)  
M.Holloway (Executive Member Community)  
D.Jones (Executive Member Resources)  
J.Quinton (Executive Member Planning)

ALSO  
PRESENT: Councillor T.Kingsbury (Leader of the Opposition)

OFFICIALS  
PRESENT: Ka Ng, Chief Executive  
Sue McDaid, Service Director (Resident & Neighbourhood)  
Saleem Chughtai, Assistant Director Legal and Governance  
Michael Sherry, Communications and Marketing Manager  
Clare Cade, Governance Services Manager

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107. APOLOGIES

No apologies were received.

108. MINUTES

The minutes from the meeting held on 6 June 2023 were approved.

109. PUBLIC QUESTION TIME AND PETITIONS

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No public questions, or petitions, were received.

110. ACTIONS STATUS REPORT

The action status report was noted.

111. NOTIFICATION OF URGENT BUSINESS TO BE CONSIDERED UNDER ITEM 11

There was no notification of urgent business to be considered.

112. DECLARATIONS OF INTERESTS BY MEMBERS

Councillor Quinton declared a non-pecuniary interest as a member of a Lemsford Resident Association.

113. ITEMS REQUIRING KEY DECISION

The following items were considered for decision in the current Forward Plan:

113.1. Disabled Adaptations Contract (Forward Plan Reference FP1178)

The report requested an extension to the contract with Gracelands Complete Maintenance Services for adaptations for 12 months until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

DECISION TAKEN

The Cabinet agreed the contract for adaptations with Gracelands Complete Maintenance Services be extended by 12 months until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2025.

REASONS FOR DECISION

On 9th March 2021, Cabinet agreed that a three year contract (from 1/4/2021 to 31/3/2024), with an optional one year extension, was awarded to Gracelands Complete Maintenance Services Limited. Councillor Chesterman OBE confirmed the contract had performed well so far with a limited number of complaints.

113.2. Food Safety Service Plan for 2023/24 (Forward Plan Reference FP1185)

The report requested the approval of the Food Safety Service Plan for 2023/24 and the proposed Food Sampling Plan.

DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet approved the service plan in Appendix A and the proposed Food Sampling Plan in Appendix B.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

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It is a requirement of the Food Standards Agency that each local authority prepares, documents and implements a food safety service plan which is approved by members.

113.3. Capital Outturn 2022/23 (Forward Plan Reference FP1173)

The report set out the capital expenditure and associated capital funding as at the end of March 2023 detailing the changes to the original capital programme and funding plans, as a result of programme commitments and project delivery.

DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet noted the overall capital outturn position and financing for 2022/23 and approved the re-phasing of budgets into 2023/24 as detailed in Appendix A of the report.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The current approved capital budget was £176.485m (which included the approved rephasing of budgets from 2021/22) and the outturn position (including proposed re-phasing of budgets into 2023/24) was £103.245m. A summary of variances to budget and re-phasing is shown in Table 1 and detailed explanations for key variances in Section 3.4. 1.3 A financing outturn table showing how the capital programme has been funded is set out in Section 4 of this report.

During this item Councillor Broach requested that progress be made on the £1m re-phasing of Angerland Football and Rugby Schemes.

113.4. Revenue Outturn 2022/23 (Forward Plan Reference FP1172)

The report presented the revenue outturn position for the financial year 2022-23 and outlines the main variances from the original budget for both the General Fund (GF) and Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

DECISION TAKEN

That Cabinet noted the revenue outturn position for 2022/23 and the position on debts set out in Section 5 of this report.

That Cabinet approved the movements on earmarked reserves as detailed in section 3.4 of the report and delegated authority to the Section 151 Officer to adjust the 2023/24 budget for items of income and expenditure rolled forward through earmarked reserves.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The report presented the revenue outturn position for the financial year 2022-23 and outlines the main variances from the original budget for both the General Fund (GF) and Housing Revenue Account (HRA).

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There was an adverse variance on the General Fund net cost of services of £1.82m. A summary showing the General Fund position was contained in Appendix A1 of the report.

After additional earmarked reserve drawdowns of £1.152m and other variances of £0.104m, this left a net favourable change in the General Fund Reserve of £0.178m.

The closing balance on the Housing Revenue Account was £2.764m, which was an adverse movement of £0.043m from the Current Budget.

Outstanding debts at 31 March 2023 total £3.401m, with rolling debtor days at 42.72.

113.5. Lemsford Village Character Assessment and Conservation Area designation (Forward Plan Reference FP1182)

The paper set out the minutes from the Cabinet Planning and Parking Panel held on 22 June 2023.

DECISION TAKEN

The Cabinet agreed to recommend to Council that Lemsford Character Assessment is to be adopted and Lemsford is designated as a new conservation area.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The Cabinet Parking and Planning Panel had received a presentation from officers on the provision of making Lemsford a designated conservation area. The Panel recommended to Cabinet that Lemsford should be considered a conservation area.

113.6. FP1183 Parking Enforcement (Forward Plan Reference FP1183)

The report requested approval of an extension to the service level agreement (SLA) with East Herts District Council

DECISION TAKEN

The Cabinet agreed that the SLA with East Herts District Council be extended by 2 years to expire on 15th January 2026.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The Parking Service carries out several functions that comprise predominantly of car parks management and maintenance, review, implementation and maintenance of parking restrictions and operation of parking enforcement services.

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The Council is part of a consortium of three councils (East Herts District Council, Stevenage Borough Council and Welwyn Hatfield Borough Council) delivering parking enforcement services.

There is a Service Level Agreement (SLA) between this Council and East Herts District Council to deliver parking enforcement services. The initial term of the SLA would expire on 16th January 2024 and there is an optional two-year extension.

114. TREASURY MANAGEMENT AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY ANNUAL REPORT 2022/23

The report requested the Cabinet note the report and the treasury management prudential indicators for 2022/23.

DECISION TAKEN

Cabinet noted the report and actual treasury management prudential indicators for 2022/23.

REASONS FOR THE DECISION

The Council carries out its Treasury Management functions within the framework of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Treasury Management in the Public Services: Code of Practice (the CIPFA Code). This required the Council to approve a treasury management strategy before the start of each financial year, and also receive mid and end of year reports.

115. PERFORMANCE EXCEPTION REPORT - QUARTER 4 (2022-23)

The report summarised the Council's corporate performance data on an exception basis following the monitoring and review of performance reports by the Chief Executive, Directors, and Assistant Directors. The period covered was 1 January to 31 March 2023.

DECISION TAKEN

That Cabinet noted the contents of this report and approved the proposed actions highlighted in the appendices of the report.

Reasons for the decision

The performance exception report is presented to the Cabinet on a quarterly basis as part of the current performance management framework.

116. COUNCIL ACHIEVEMENTS LIST (JANUARY TO MARCH 2023)

The Council Achievement List was noted.

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

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There were no items of business under this item and the meeting was drawn to a close

Meeting ended 18.55.