

Cabinet

Minutes of meeting held in Room 209/210 on the Second Floor, The Marine Workshops, Railway Quay, Newhaven, East Sussex, BN9 0ER. on 11 July 2024 at 2.30 pm.

Present:

Councillor Zoe Nicholson (Chair).
Councillors Christine Robinson (Deputy-Chair), Chris Collier, Johnny Denis, Wendy Maples, Emily O'Brien, Laurence O'Connor and Mark Slater.

Officers in attendance:

Robert Cottrill (Chief Executive), Ian Fitzpatrick (Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning), Becky Cooke (Director of Tourism, Culture and Organisational Development), Simon Russell (Head of Democratic Services and Monitoring Officer), Kate Slattery (Head of Legal Services), Luke Dreeling (Performance Lead), Linda Farley (Assistant Director, Customer Service and Delivery), Nathan Haffenden (Assistant Director, Property and Development), Steven Houchin (Deputy Chief Finance Officer), Lynn Ingram (Interim Head of Financial Planning), Emma Kemp (Senior Planning Policy Officer), Kate Richardson (Sustainability Lead), Marc Stephens (Interim Head of Development and Acquisitions) and Ross Sutton (Head of Financial Reporting).

Also in attendance:

Councillor Christine Brett (Chair of Policy and Performance Advisory Committee) and Councillor Stephen Gauntlett (Chair of Audit and Governance Committee).

7 Minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2024

The minutes of the meeting held on 6 June 2024 were submitted and approved and the Chair was authorised to sign them as a correct record.

8 Apologies for absence

None were reported.

9 Declarations of interest

None were declared.

10 Order of business

The Chair advised that the order of business for the meeting would be amended to consider agenda item 14 (Newhaven Square – Health and Wellbeing Hub) first.

11 Newhaven Square - Health & Wellbeing Hub

The Cabinet considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning, driving forward the Newhaven Square – Health and Wellbeing Hub project, forming part of the Reimagining Newhaven programme, into the delivery phase.

Duncan Kerr (Chief Executive, Wave Active) and Dr Paul Moore (Quayside Medical Practice) addressed the Cabinet and spoke about the importance of the proposals set out in the report and the value of partnership working. Thanks were expressed to all involved for getting the project to its current point.

Policy and Performance Advisory Committee (PPAC), held on 10 July 2024 considered the report and were supportive of the officer recommendations in full. Councillor Gauntlett, Leader of the Opposition, also spoke in support of the proposals.

Resolved (Key decision):

(1) To approve the Newhaven Square – Health & Wellbeing Hub scheme financial appraisal and business case in accordance with Appendix 1 (Exempt) to the report, forming part of the Reimagining Newhaven programme.

(2) To delegate authority to the Assistant Director – Property and Development, in consultation with the Director of Finance and Performance (S151 Officer) and the Lead Member for Finance, Assets and Community Wealth Building, to make an allocation within the General Fund Capital Programme and to take all necessary actions to deliver the project, including determining, executing and completing all leases, contracts, and all other related documentation.

Reason for decisions:

To provide the required approvals to deliver the Newhaven Square – Health and Wellbeing Hub project.

Notes: (1) The appendix remained exempt. (2) Exempt information reason 3 – information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).

12 Complaints Management Policy

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Executive, asking it to agree a corporate complaints policy.

Cabinet advised that once the policy was implemented, officers would set up a quarterly internal officer group, to look at complaints received in the past quarter and ensure actions were being taken to improve services and then

reported back to the Local Government and Social Care Ombudsman.

Policy and Performance Advisory Committee (PPAC), held on 10 July 2024 considered the report and were supportive of the officer recommendations in full.

Resolved (Key decision):

(1) To agree the draft Complaints Management Policy as set out at appendix 1 to the report.

(2) To agree to a period of consultation being undertaken on the draft policy with residents, tenants and other stakeholders.

(3) To give delegated authority to the Assistant Director for Customer Service and Delivery, in conjunction with the Cabinet Member, to undertake any final minor amendments to the Policy in light of the consultation.

Reason for decisions:

To enable the public to have a clear understanding of the way complaints are dealt with by the council.

13 Recommendations for Community Infrastructure Levy Spending

The Cabinet considered the report of the Chief Executive, seeking approval to release Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) funds, as recommended by the CIL Executive Board, to help deliver infrastructure projects required to support development in the district.

Policy and Performance Advisory Committee (PPAC), held on 10 July 2024 considered the report and were supportive of the officer recommendation in full.

Resolved (Key decision):

To agree the release of funds from the CIL governance pots as recommended by the CIL Executive Board.

Reason for decision:

To help deliver the right level and type of infrastructure to support the growth identified for the local planning authority in the adopted Joint Core Strategy.

14 Climate and Nature Strategy and Action Plan 2024

The Cabinet considered the report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Director of Regeneration and Planning, presenting the new Climate and Nature Strategy and Action Plan for publication.

The Plan built upon achievements since 2019 and set out updated priority actions that were needed to deliver net zero at the council and the wider Lewes district. It also included actions to tackle the dangerous decline in nature caused by human activities.

Thanks were expressed to those that had contributed to the Plan and also to officers for their process in ensuring a variety of views were captured.

Policy and Performance Advisory Committee (PPAC), held on 10 July 2024 considered the report and were supportive of the officer recommendations in full, subject to the following being considered.

For Appendix 1, it was requested that Cabinet amend the wording under ‘Water, Rivers and Seas’ for ‘Our objectives, targets and milestones to meet the challenges’ and that it be changed so as to remove references to “to seek” and “to advocate” as such wording is not appropriate when describing an objective, without suggesting that the Council has lead responsibilities in these areas.

Cabinet considered the recommendation from PPAC and agreed an amended form of wording for Appendix 1 on page 27, which was detailed below, prior to the agreement of the Strategy.

Objectives:

We will support and encourage the responsible authorities, stakeholder communities, landowners and others in their efforts to:

- mitigate the risk posed by a changing coast
- support communities to be resilient to flooding
- manage waterways and improve water quality
- preserve our water resources

Resolved (Key decision):

(1) To approve the Climate and Nature Strategy 2024 and Action Plan for final design and publication on the council’s website.

(2) To note the achievements to date.

Reason for decisions:

To progress the aims of the council’s Climate Emergency Declaration (2019), to make the council net zero carbon by 2030 and to assist the same aim to be achieved within the wider district.

15 Portfolio progress and performance report quarter 4 - 2023-2024

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Finance and Performance, considering the council's progress and performance in respect of service areas for the fourth quarter of the year (January – March 2024), as shown at Appendix 1 to the report.

Policy and Performance Advisory Committee (PPAC), held on 10 July 2024 considered the report and were supportive of the officer recommendations in full.

Thanks were expressed to officers for their work in producing the new suite of performance indicators for 2024/25, including the addition of key performance indicators around sustainability, housing performance transparency and waste and recycling.

Resolved (Non-key decision):

(1) To note progress and performance for Quarter 4 2023/24.

(2) To agree the suite of performance indicators for 2024/25 as set out at appendix 2 to the report, subject to any final minor changes which are delegated to the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the cabinet member for innovation, delivery and people.

Reason for decision:

To enable Cabinet members to consider specific aspects of the council's progress and performance.

16 Provisional Revenue and Capital Outturn 2023-24

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Finance and Performance, updating it on the provisional outturn for 2023/24.

The provision outturn position for 2023/24 was an overspend of £0.298m as shown in Table 1 of the report.

Section 1.5 of the report detailed the main drivers for the cost pressures affecting the Council and work would continue on speaking to Central Government over local government funding.

Policy and Performance Advisory Committee (PPAC), held on 10 July 2024 considered the report and were supportive of the officer recommendations in full. Councillor Gauntlett, Chair of Audit and Governance Committee added that the Council's external auditor had confirmed at their meeting earlier that all outstanding work would be completed by the next meeting, scheduled on the 5 August 2024.

Resolved (Key decision):

(1) To note and approve the revenue and capital provisional outturn for 2023/24 subject to final accounting adjustments.

(2) To approve the funding of the General Fund provisional outturn 2023/24 of £0.298m from general fund balances.

(3) To note and approve the housing revenue account provisional outturn for 2023/24 subject to final accounting adjustments; and

(4) To give delegated authority to the Cabinet member for finance, assets and community wealth building, in consultation with Chief Finance Officer to make final accounting adjustments.

Reason for decisions:

To enable Cabinet members to consider the Council's financial performance for 2023/24.

17 Treasury Management Annual Report 2023/24

The Cabinet considered the report of the Director of Finance and Performance, presenting the Annual Treasury Management report for 2023/24.

Audit and Governance Committee, held on 11 July 2024 considered the report and were supportive of the officer recommendations in full.

Recommended to Full Council (Budget and policy framework):

(1) To approve the Annual Treasury Management report 2023/24.

(2) To approve the 2023/24 Prudential and Treasury Indicators included in the report.

Reason for decisions:

The report is a requirement of CIPFA Treasury Management in the Public Sector Code of Practice (the Code) and this has to be reported to Full Council.

The meeting ended at 3.32 pm

Councillor Zoe Nicholson (Chair)