

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL  
MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING

held at  
Council Chamber  
The Symington Building  
Adam and Eve Street  
Market Harborough  
LE16 7AG

11<sup>th</sup> October 2021

commencing at 5.30pm

Present:

Cllr King (Chair)

Councillors: Bateman, Hallam and Whelband

Officers: D. Atkinson, S. Green, S. Hamilton, C. Mason, N. Proudfoot, J. Smith  
and V. Wenham

INFORMATION EXCHANGE FROM PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

Wellbeing, Communities & Housing

Councillor Whelband reported on the recent arson attack which took place on Friday 8<sup>th</sup> October in Warwick Park in Kibworth and encouraged anyone with any information to come forward. Councillor Whelband advised that he had been communicating with the police over the weekend and spoken to the Chief Inspector, Jim Purdie, prior to the meeting about this incident and the police are undertaken a number of steps to try and identify who was behind the attack, including visiting Kibworth Academy.

Councillor Whelband also reported that the police were in the process of filming two Snapchat videos to coincide with Halloween and Bonfire Night and certain areas within the District will be geo-fenced to receive these video messages via Snapchat. Inspector Purdie has advised that Harborough District is the first in the country to use Snapchat in this way.

In addition, Councillor Whelband reported that the Community Safety Partnership (CSP) had completed their review into Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) issues at Little Bowden Recreation Ground, following a request by Council and the associated report will be circulated shortly. ASB has greatly reduced on the Recreation Ground and very positive feedback has been received from residents commenting on the recent improvements. Councillor Whelband expressed his thanks to all in the CSP team for their work on the comprehensive review.

Strategy

Councillor King reported that he had attended a number of meetings, including the Members Advisory Group regarding Strategic Planning, the East Midlands Council Regional Employers.

The Chairman, Councillor Whelband, Officers and himself had attended the Leicestershire Live Business Awards on the 16<sup>th</sup> September where a business, 'Armourgeddon' based within the District waws named family business of the year, which was a great achievement, and staff were thanked for arranging sponsorship of the event.

22<sup>nd</sup> September - Councillor King attended the inaugural lecture of the new Vice Chancellor of De Montfort University.

23<sup>rd</sup> September – Councillor King met with Bishop Snow, regarding community issues in Church Langton concerning their landholding; and

29<sup>th</sup> September – Councillor King had a meeting with other leaders of Leicestershire District Councils and Chief Executives to discuss matters of common interest.

### TOPICAL ISSUES

There were none.

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

An apology had been received from Councillor Dann.

### MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 6<sup>th</sup> September 2021 be approved as a correct record.

### DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were none.

### BAD DEBT WRITE OFFS (REVENUES AND BENEFITS)

The Cabinet received a report that requested it to approve write off of debts in respect of National Non-Domestic Rates (Business Rates) and was advised on what debts have been written off this financial year under delegation for the revenue and benefits service area as outlined in the report.

RESOLVED that the total amounts for National Non-Domestic Rates (Business Rates) £376,135.65 as listed in Appendix A to the report, be written off.

### Summary of Reasons

To comply with proper accounting practices.

### SOLAR TOGETHER COLLECTIVE SOLAR PROCUREMENT SCHEME

The Cabinet considered a report on the Solar Together Collective Solar Procurement Scheme. Collective Solar procurement offers an opportunity to householders, who may be interested in installing solar PV panels and battery storage but are concerned about finding appropriate installers, to be

supported through the process. Solar PV and battery storage offer excellent carbon saving opportunities for homeowners.

iChoosr, who currently operate the successful Collective Switching project, also offer a collective approach to purchasing solar panels and battery storage, using an auction model with qualified installers. iChoosr, through Blaby District Council have approached Leicestershire authorities to work together to provide this offer to residents across Leicestershire. Blaby District Council will be the lead authority for the procurement, via a single source concession with iChoosr and have and have invited other districts to join their agreement through a Memorandum of Understanding.

The Council has declared a climate emergency and one area of action is to ensure that residents are advised and supported to reduce their own emissions. Collective Solar procurement allows residents to get a good price on solar installs and be assured of the quality of the installation. A community champion, such as the Council, provides a level of reassurance about the process. This is aimed at homeowners, with sufficient funds to make the investment themselves, but who may be concerned about finding a good quality installer on their own.

The Scheme will commence in 2022. There are potentially three auctions during the year which the council could be part of once signed up however the Council will only sign up to one auction each year. As with collective switching, residents can register an interest in an auction and will be provided with all the relevant information following the auction and there is no commitment on them to take up the offer. Homeowners who join the scheme would have full support and information and the suitability of their home would be assessed prior to any installation They would also receive industry guarantees after the install was complete. The price of the installation should be lower than market price (the previous auction returned 30% savings), but the actual saving cannot be advised on until after the auction.

There are also several added benefits to the Council by taking part in the collective purchase scheme: significant measurable carbon reduction driven by resident investment in green energy; group buying is an extremely cost-effective option; small investment of council resource to drive significant private investment; supplier vetting and engagement handled by iChoosr; and customer support handled by iChoosr.

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the principles of collective solar procurement be noted and the agreement to a scheme to be developed in the district.
- (ii) Authority be delegated to the Director, Law and Governance and Monitoring Officer following consultation with the Cabinet Member to enter into the necessary legal agreement and take such other steps as are necessary to implement recommendation (i) above.

### Summary of Reasons

Collective solar procurement offers an opportunity to residents to install solar panels at reduced costs and supported through the process. The installation of solar panels provides excellent carbon reduction possibilities across the district.

### AIR QUALITY UPDATE – ANNUAL STATUS REPORT 2021

The Cabinet considered the report on the outcome of the annual review of local air quality across the district which is required to be submitted to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs.

Generally the air quality throughout the district is good however there are known issues in both Lutterworth and areas of Kibworth Beauchamp and Kibworth Harcourt along the A6 highway which cuts both villages, with regards to exceedances of the annual average objective level for Nitrogen Dioxide. An Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) has been declared in both areas. The Lutterworth AQMA was first declared in 2001 and The Kibworths AQMA in November 2017.

The Annual Status Report (ASR) provides a detailed assessment of any monitoring results carried out in the district for the previous year along with any action undertaken to work towards improving air quality and is based on the calendar year 2020.

Whilst the 2021 Annual Status Report is the formal submission for activities and monitoring undertaken during 2020, there have several interventions undertaken in 2021 to date which work towards improving local air quality, including the continuation of real time monitoring of Nitrogen Dioxide levels in The Kibworths using a permanent roadside Nitrogen Dioxide reference monitor.

RESOLVED that the 2020 Air Quality Annual Status Report (ASR) for submission to DEFRA as set out in Appendix A to the report be approved.

#### Summary of Reasons

Compliance with Part IV of the Environment Act 1995.

#### DEVELOPMENT MANAGEMENT SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)

The Cabinet considered the Development Management Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The Council has a range of 21 Supplementary Planning Guidance documents dating from 2003. As these were prepared many years prior to the adoption in April 2019 of the new Harborough Local Plan they are out of date. In turn that greatly reduces their relevance, and help they give to customers planning proposals and subsequent planning decisions.

The suggested SPD aims to rationalise and simplify the 2003 Supplementary Planning Guidance into one up to date document. Public consultation has been carried out concerning the updated Development Management Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) and the responses made and officers response to them are reported at Appendix A to the report. Where appropriate the SPD has been amended in light of these consultation responses. The amendments made are set out in the response to consultation at Appendix A. The resulting post consultation version of the SPD document is at Appendix B to the report.

#### **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**

- (i) That the Development Management Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) be adopted as attached at Appendix B to the report.**

#### Summary of Reasons

The Council has a range of 21 Supplementary Planning Guidance documents dating from 2003. As these were prepared a number of prior to the April 2019 Harborough Local Plan they are now out of date and in need of updating.

## PLANNING APPLICATION LOCAL VALIDATION LIST

The Cabinet considered the report on the Planning Application Local Validation List. Planning applications must satisfy national information requirements to be able to be registered as valid applications. These national validation needs are made up of plans and drawings, site ownership certificate and sometimes a Design and Access Statement.

A local planning authority may supplement this and request more supporting information with a planning application. To do that, any requirements should be specified on an Planning Application Local Validation List which is not less than 2 years old. This local list may be prepared by a local planning authority to clarify what information is usually required for applications of a particular type, scale or location.

As the current validation list was prepared in 2013, it is out of date. It also refers to old core strategy policies and previous versions of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). It is therefore in need of updating and a new Planning Application Local Validation List adopting.

### **RECOMMENDED TO COUNCIL**

**That the up-to-date Planning Application Local Validation List be adopted as attached at Appendix 2 to the report.**

### Summary of Reasons

To enable the Cabinet to consider a revised and updated draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – Planning Obligations and to issue it for a period of public re-consultation.

## THE PLANNING OBLIGATIONS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD)

The Cabinet considered the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). The Planning Obligations SPD is intended to inform planning documents and development management decisions by the Council. It is also intended to inform and guide; developers, landowners, infrastructure providers, stakeholders/partners and local communities about the approach Harborough District Council is taking to secure community infrastructure and affordable housing through planning obligations.

In order to ensure the SPD remains relevant and effective, it is important the document is as up to date as possible. The SPD reflects the adopted Harborough District Local Plan, April 2019, and also needs to take into account any changes in Government legislation, regulations, policies and guidance.

The Planning Obligations SPD (consultation draft) went through a period of public and stakeholder consultation between 11th December 2020 and 5th February 2021 for a period of eight weeks. A total of 23 agencies/councils/developers/individuals/organisations submitted representations to the Council in respect of the Planning Obligations SPD (consultation draft). As a result of the representations received and changes to Government Policy some changes have been made to the Planning Obligations SPD. The revised version is detailed at Appendix A to the report.

**RESOLVED** that the Planning Obligations Supplementary Planning Document be approved for public and stakeholder re-consultation.

### Summary of Reasons

To enable the Cabinet to consider a revised and updated draft Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) – Planning Obligations and to issue it for a period of public re-consultation.

### INFRASTRUCTURE FUNDING STATEMENT (IFS)

The Cabinet considered the report on the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS). Community Infrastructure Levy (Amendment) (No.2) (England) Regulations came into force on 1 September 2019. Under the regulations, Infrastructure Funding Statements (IFS) replace CIL Regulation 123 Lists as the mechanism through which infrastructure projects are identified.

The IFS is required to be published annually to provide a summary of all financial and non-financial developer contributions relating to Section 106s within the district. It will include a statement of infrastructure projects that the Council intends to, be wholly or partly funded by planning obligations. It will also set out the spending protocol including the process that the Council will undertake for allocating planning obligations.

In comparison to the previous year, 2020/21 has seen a lower amount of contributions received and contributions spent and a low number of S106 agreements signed. A key factor has been the Covid 19 pandemic which has impacted on wider economic activity, including the construction industry and the resultant constraints on service providers/stakeholders/infrastructure partners e.g., health bodies needing to focus on the pandemic rather than able to spend/implement infrastructure through available S106 funds.

The Cabinet noted that 207 affordable dwellings were completed within 2020/21, which was seen as a considerable achievement.

RESOLVED that the Infrastructure Funding Statement (IFS) be approved for publication as attached at Appendix A to the report.

### Summary of Reasons

To enable the Cabinet to consider the content of the IFS and to approve its publication.

### SECTION 100(A) LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972

RESOLVED that the public and press be excluded from the following items on the grounds that the matters yet to be discussed involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Schedule 12A to the Local Government Act 1972.

### SUPPORT FOR THE LEISURE SERVICE PROVIDER REVIEW

RESOLVED that the 6 month review be noted and a further six months funding up until 31<sup>st</sup> March 2022 be approved as per the Council decision in April '21.

### Summary of Reasons

To ensure the maintenance of the Council's leisure provision for the remainder of 2021/22.

CONSIDERATION OF CONTRACT EXTENSION FOR EXISTING SERVICE PROVIDER

RESOLVED that:

- (i) the contract with SLM be extended to 31 March 2024 with a management fee payable to SLM in year 1; and
- (ii) authority be delegated to the Director, Law and Governance, following consultation with the relevant portfolio holder(s) to make any necessary amendments to the contractual arrangements with SLM.

Summary of Reasons

To recommend a two year contract extension with the Council's current leisure provider.

APPROVAL OF A CONTRACTOR TO PROVIDE SUPPORT IN THE INITIAL STAGE OF PROCUREMENT OF A NEW FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.

RESOLVED that the appointment of the agreed contractor be approved to undertake the Stage 1 work involved in the procurement of a Financial Management System.

Summary of Reasons

To support the Council's transformation of key ICT infrastructure as determined by the Councils recently approved ICT Strategy.

TO CONSIDER MATTERS OF SPECIAL URGENCY

There were none.

The meeting ended at 6.31 p.m.