

HARBOROUGH DISTRICT COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE CABINET MEETING

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

3rd April 2023
commencing at 5.30pm

Present:

Councillors: Bateman, Dann, Hallam, King (Chair), Whelband

Officers: L.Elliott, C.Pattinson, C.Mason, D.Atkinson, S.Hamilton, V.Jessop,
C.Averill, K.Aitken.

1. INFORMATION EXCHANGE FROM PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

Wellbeing, Communities and Housing

Councillor Whelband reported on the continuing work on the leisure centre contract procurement, which should be commencing March 2024. Selection stage has now closed, and five completed questionnaires have been received from potential bidders. These are currently being reviewed by the project team, and those bids that meet the criteria will be invited to submit an initial tender.

He also went on to highlight that Harborough District Council has been awarded £1.7 million via the Local Authority Housing Fund, for the construction of 14 properties across the district. These properties will be used to house both those from Ukraine and Afghanistan, that have been forced to flee their countries. Platform Housing Group will be purchasing the properties from the council.

Councillor Whelband also highlighted that the Coronation Fund is now running and will be providing grants of up to £500 to promote wellbeing across the district.

Strategy

Councillor King discussed the end of year fly-tipping numbers for the Harborough district. He clarified that there had been 317 incidents in the 2022/23 year, which has significantly reduced from 2018.

He also highlighted the council's involvement this year's livestock worrying campaign. He highlighted that the Police would be holding a rural crime engagement event at Welland Valley Feeds on 15th April.

Cllr King also discussed the District Councils Network independent research, which had been carried out by BritianThinks, about public attitudes to local services in their areas. It concluded that district council services are valued highly and more trusted over other Councils.

1. TOPICAL ISSUES

There were none.

2. APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were none.

3. DECLARATION OF MEMBERS' INTERESTS

There were none.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on the 6th March 2023 be approved as a correct record.

5. Performance – Quarter 3 2022-2023

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report which showed the Council's Performance from Oct-Dec 22. He discussed the 32 Key activities, and specified that there were no red activities, and five amber activities. Councillor Dann then talked through the Key Activities which have an Amber status at the end of Quarter 3. Cllr Dann also brought attention to KA.04.04 economic development strategy, which was included in the appendices. Cllr Dann also went through the Status of Strategic Performance Dashboard. He discussed the KPIs that are improving, and one KPI which has declined.

Councillor King queried whether KA.01.08, detailing the timeline of planning decision-making was still improving. The officer answered that the previous issues within the team have been resolved, and that he anticipates improvements to continue and the performance trajectory to be upwards.

Councillor King also questioned whether there had been improvements on payments to creditors within 30 days. The officer was happy with the expected improvements on this KPI.

RESOLVED that the Cabinet consider and comment on the contents of this report.

Reasons for Recommendation

The Council's Performance Management Framework requires that both Scrutiny and the Cabinet have a role in monitoring the performance of the Council against its Corporate Delivery Plan.

6. Risk and Opportunity Management Framework

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report which seeks to give greater scope and flexibility on how the Council deals with risks, by moving from a 4x4 matrix to a 5x5 matrix.

RESOLVED that Cabinet approve the following, Amendments to the Risk Management Framework to use a 5 x 5 scoring matrix instead of a 4 x4 Matrix to improve the accuracy of recording risk and mitigations.

Reasons for recommendation

The current Risk and Opportunity framework is approved by Cabinet and is reviewed every two years. This report identifies revisions to the current framework and so it needs Cabinet approval to make this changes.

The Risk and Opportunity framework sets out how the Council manages and monitors risks.

7. Local Authorities (Goods & Services) Act 1970 – Procurement Services

The Portfolio Holder introduced the report, which detailed the future of procurement services at Harborough District Council. He specified that the procurement function had been in-house since 2013. Due to the retirement of the Procurement Officer at the Council, this was the opportune time to look again at the council's procurement. The report requires agreement of a £35,000 reduction to outsource the council's procurement to the Welland procurement service run by Melton Borough Council.

Councillor Hallam accepts the change in circumstances and invites collaboration with other local authorities.

RESOLVED that:

1. The Procurement Service is provided by Welland Procurement Partnership, a direct service provided of Melton Borough Council;
2. The Director of Governance and Law, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Corporate Services authority to:
 - a. agree the terms of the arrangement with Melton Borough Council and record the same in a service level agreement;
 - b. determine and conclude practical actions required to give lawful effect to the service provision.

Reasons for recommendation

Sharing of services with a partner has been actively considered and explored, this will build both capacity and service resilience.

8. External report work at The Symington Building.

Prior to the Portfolio Holder introducing the report, the Leader, Councillor King noted that Appendix A is exempt, and asked if the Cabinet would like to discuss this appendix.

The Cabinet did not, as such, the Portfolio Holder introduced the report which details external work at The Symington Building, to ensure the building is fit for purpose, and to deal with current deterioration to the building. Councillor Hallam goes on to explain the reports findings that the use of an external contractor would be the most cost-effective option. He went on to state that the Council did approve capital of £372,000 in February 2022 for a two phase enhancement of The Symington Building. He then explained the details of the work that was required to be carried out.

Councillor Hallam went on to thank the Deputy Chief Executive, Head of Financial Services and the finance team for their help.

Councillor King asked when phase two of the enhancement of The Symington Building was expected to start. The officer responded that the second phase was expected to start in the next financial year (2023/24).

RESOLVED that:

1. The Cabinet committee approve for the contract to be awarded to the preferred contractor as detailed in appendix A.
2. The authority award, negotiate and finalise the contract for external works to The Symington Building be delegated to the Deputy Chief Executive Officer in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Assets, Finance together with the Legal and Democratic Services to award, negotiate and finalise the contract.

Reasons for recommendation

1. To ensure that the Council appoints a suitable contractor to undertake the specialist work to the external elevations and associated works of The Symington Building within the programme timescales.
2. The SCAPE framework is a public sector procurement authority which offers a suite of fully managed frameworks that are available to any public body in the UK, such as schools, councils and NHS trusts. Its direct award frameworks are fully compliant with UK and EU procurement law and are designed to accelerate projects and deliver them to the highest possible standard. The frameworks are designed to be fair, transparent and offer value of money to the taxpayer.

TO CONSIDER ANY MATTERS OF SPECIAL URGENCY

There were none.

The meeting ended at 5.56pm.