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SOUTHEND-ON-SEA CITY COUNCIL

Meeting of Cabinet

Date: Tuesday, 18th July, 2023

Place: Jubilee Room - Civic Suite

Present: Councillor T Cox (Chair)
Councillors M Davidson (Vice-Chair), H Boyd, K Buck, J Courtenay,
D Garston, J Lamb, J Moyies and D Nelson

In Attendance: Councillors L Burton and A Jones
M Marks, J Chesterton, C Gamble, M Harvey, A Keating, S Newman
and A Richards

Start/End Time: 6.30 pm - 7.01 pm

18 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Jarvis.

19 Declarations of Interest

The following declarations of interest were made:

(a) Cllr Buck – Minute 26 (Notice of Motion – Better Queensway) – Council appointed Board member South Essex Homes.

(b) Cllr Moyies – Minute 28 (Notice of Motion – WASPI) – Sister is affected as a WASPI woman.

(c) Cllr Nelson – Minute 22 (Public Health Annual Report) – wife works at the hospital.

(d) A Richards – Minute 26 (Notice of Motion – Better Queensway) – Council representative on Porters Place LLP.

20 Apologies for Absence

Resolved:-

That the Minutes of the Meeting held on DAY MONTH YEAR be confirmed as a correct record and signed.

21 Delivery of Southend Outcomes and Priorities - Annual Report and Provisional Outturn 2022/23

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) presenting the Council's Annual Report for 2022/23, highlighting the achievements, successes, and challenges towards delivery of the Corporate Plan.

Resolved:

1. That the achievements, successes and challenges brought to life within the Annual Report 2022/23, as set out at Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be noted.

Recommended:

2. That the provisional 2022/23 revenue outturn position for both the General Fund and Housing Revenue Account (HRA), be noted and that the agreement of any final adjustments, following the completion and audit of the Statement of Accounts, be delegated to the Executive Director (Finance and Resources).

3. That the appropriation of revenue funds to and from earmarked reserves, as set out in the report, be approved.

4. That the potential revenue impact of the 2022/23 outturn on the 2023/24 General Fund budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy, be noted.

5. That it be noted that the expenditure on the capital investment programme for 2022/23 totalled £51.822M against a revised budget of £61.820M.

6. That the relevant budget carry forwards and accelerated delivery requests totalling a net £13.032M moving into 2023/24 and future years, as set out in Appendix 2 to the submitted report, be approved.

7. That the virements, reprofiles, additions, deletions and new external funding for schemes, as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report, be approved and that it be noted that this will result in an amended Capital Investment Programme deliverable by the Council of £137.705M for the period 2023/24 to 2027/28, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report.

8. That it be noted that the requested changes as detailed in Appendix 2 to the report will result in an amended total Capital Investment Programme deliverable by South Essex Homes Limited, Porters Place Southend-on-Sea LLP and Kent County Council of £59.046M, as detailed in Appendix 3 to the report.

9. That it be noted that a further review of the affordability and prioritisation of the current approved Capital Investment Programme and all the schemes currently listed as subject to viable business cases will be brought back to a future Cabinet meeting.

10. That the content of the Infrastructure Funding Statement 2022/23 (included in Appendix 4 to the report), be noted and that the CIL Main Fund receipts be carried forward from reported year 2022/23 and previous reported years until the CIL Governance Framework and spending plans are reviewed for the reported year 2023/24, or Cabinet authorise any detailed spending proposals.

11. That authority be delegated to the Executive Director for Growth and Housing, in consultation with Ward Members and the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning to agree how the CIL Ward Neighbourhood Allocations received up until 31 March 2023 (excluding allocation to Leigh Town Council) are to be spent.

Reasons for decisions:

1. To provide Cabinet with the provisional revenue and capital outturn position for 2022/23.
2. As part of the year end processes, Cabinet is required to approve any appropriations to or from earmarked reserves. This report fulfils that purpose.
3. Cabinet is required to approve capital budget carry forwards, accelerated delivery requests and in year amendments to the current approved programme.

Other Options:

None. This is a factual report setting out the 2022/23 outturn and is a reporting requirement of good financial governance.

Note: The decision in Resolution 1 above constitutes an Executive Function. The Recommendations in 2 to 11 constitute Council Functions.

Not eligible for call-in as the matter has been subject to pre-Cabinet Scrutiny by the Policy and Resources Committee.

Cabinet Member: Cllr Cox

22 Public Annual Health Report

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director (Children and Public Health) presenting the 2022/23 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health.

Resolved:

That the 2022/23 Annual Report of the Director of Public Health, be noted.

Reasons for decision:

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 requires Directors of Public Health to prepare an annual report on the health of the local population.

Other options:

None.

Note: This is an Executive Function

Not eligible for call-in as the matter has been subject to pre-Cabinet scrutiny by the People Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Moyies

23 Official Feed and Service Plan 2023-24

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director (Environment and Place) presenting the Official Feed and Food Control Service Plan 2023-24.

Recommended:

1. That the achievements against the previous Feed and Food Control Service Plan 2022-23, be noted.

2. That the Official Feed and Food Control Service Plan 2023-24, be approved.

Reasons for decision:

To comply with the Food Standards Agency Framework Agreement.

Other options:

None. This is a statutory requirement.

Note: This is a Council Function

Not eligible for call-in as the matter has been the subject of pre-Cabinet scrutiny by the Place Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Lamb

24 Treasury Management Report 2022/23

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) presenting the Annual Treasury Management Report covering the treasury activity for the period from April 2022 to March 2023.

Resolved:

1. That the Annual Treasury Management Report for 2022/23 and the outturn Prudential Indicators for 2022/23, be approved.

2. That it be noted that the financing of 2022/23 capital expenditure of £51.822m has been funded in accordance with the schedule set out in the submitted report.

3. That it be noted that Capital Financing and Treasury Management were carried out in accordance with statutory requirements, good practice and in compliance with the CIPFA (The Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) Prudential Code during 2022/23.

4. That the following in respect of the return on investment and borrowing, be noted:

- The loan and investment portfolios were actively managed to minimise cost and maximise interest earned, whilst maintaining a low level of risk.

- £3.773m of interest and income distributions for all investments were earned during 2022/23 at an average rate of 2.37%. This is 0.13% over the average SONIA rate (Sterling Overnight Index Average) and 0.07% over the average bank base rate. Also, the value of the externally managed funds decreased by a net of £7.335m due to the changes in the unit price, giving a combined return of -2.24%.

- The level of borrowing from the Public Works Loan Board (PWLb) (excluding debt relating to services transferred from Essex County

Council on 1st April 1998) remained at £347.3m (Housing Revenue Account (HRA): £74.2m, General Fund (GF): £273.1m) throughout 2022/23.

- The level of financing for 'invest to save' schemes decreased from £8.39m to £8.22m by the end of 2022/23.

Reasons for decision:

The CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management recommends that Local Authorities should submit reports regularly. The Treasury Management Policy Statement for 2022/23 sets out that reports would be submitted to Cabinet quarterly on the activities of the treasury management operation.

Other Options:

There are many options available for the operation of the Treasury Management function, with varying degrees of risk associated with them. The Treasury Management Policy aims to effectively control risk to within a prudent level, whilst providing optimum performance consistent with that level of risk.

Note: This is an Executive Function

Not eligible for call-in as the matter has been the subject of pre-Cabinet scrutiny by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

Cabinet Member: Cllr Cox

25 HRA - Heating Charges

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) setting out the rationale for reducing heating charges in view of the lower contract costs currently in force for the supply of gas to properties with communal heating systems.

Resolved:

1. That the heating charges to properties with a communal heating system be reduced, with effect from Monday 4th September 2023 as set out in the submitted report.
2. That future decisions to decrease heating charges be enacted automatically by officers in consultation with the relevant Portfolio Holder, without further need for future papers to Scrutiny or Cabinet, so as to pass savings onto residents in a timely manner.
3. That any future proposed charging increase(s) be reported to the relevant Scrutiny Committee and Cabinet for consideration before any decision is taken.

Reasons for decision:

Without taking the proposed action the Council, through the management of South Essex Homes, would overcharge tenants that are supplied with heating and hot water from communal heating systems and would fail to comply with a fair charging system under the Heat Network Regulations. The recommended action

is therefore proposed through which to charge affected tenants the correct amount over the course of the year.

Other options:

None

Note: This is an Executive Function

Not eligible for call-in as the matter has been the subject of pre-Cabinet scrutiny by the Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee.

Cabinet Member: Cllr Garston

26 Notice of Motion - Better Queensway

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director (Environment and Place) responding to the Notice of Motion concerning Better Queensway referred to Cabinet by Special Council held on 29th June 2023.

Resolved:

That the amended Notice of Motion (Better Queensway) endorsed by Special Council held on 29th June 2023, as set out at Appendix 1 to the submitted report, be approved.

Reasons for decision:

To respond to the Notice of Motion.

Other options:

None

Note: This is an Executive Function

This matter is not eligible for call-in.

Cabinet Member: Cllr Nelson

27 Notice of Motion - For Great Homes Upgrade

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director (Environment and Place) providing a response to a Notice of Motion referred by Council on 23rd March 2023 to Cabinet calling on the Government for a Great Homes Upgrade and a commitment to retrofit 19 million homes by 2030.

Resolved:

That the Council continues to pursue its ambitions to retrofit our housing stock to reduce heat demand, save energy and assist our tenants with their fuel costs. To assist with the retrofit challenge, the Council will continue to bid for funding wherever possible and notes the Notice of Motion intention to request Government assistance with additional resources for Local Authorities to achieve our retrofit targets.

Reasons for decision:

To respond to the Notice of Motion.

Other options:

None

Note: This is an Executive Function

This matter is not eligible for call-in.

Cabinet Member: Cllr Garston

28 Notice of Motion - Women Against State Pension Inequality (WASPI)

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director providing a response to a Notice of Motion referred by Council held on 23rd March 2023 to Cabinet asking the Leader of the Council to write to Southend's local Members of Parliament and the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions (DWP) in support of the Southend WASPI who have suffered financially because of changes to the rise in pension age.

Resolved:

That the Leader of the Council writes to the two local Members of Parliament, and to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions to outline the effects of the injustice to 1950s women on the community in the City of Southend-on-Sea and to seek their support for an immediate compensation package.

Reasons for decision:

To respond to the Notice of Motion.

Other options:

None

Note: This is an Executive Function

Eligible for call-in to: Policy and Resources Scrutiny Committee

Cabinet Member: Cllr Cox

29 Air Quality Action Plan 2023-2027

The Chair agreed to take this matter as an urgent item.

The Cabinet considered a report of the Executive Director (Environment and Place) presenting the Air Quality Action Plan 2023-2027 for adoption.

Resolved:

1. That the Air Quality Action Plan 2023-2027, as set out in Appendix 1 to the submitted report for the Air Quality Management Area 2 (Appendix 2 to the submitted report), be approved and that it be noted that the Plan must be adopted no later than the negotiated, extended DEFRA deadline of 31 July 2023.

2. That the relevancy of air quality measures contained within the Air Quality Action Plan 2023-2007 to Air Quality Management Area 1 and the rest of the City, be noted.

Reasons for decision:

It is a statutory duty to put in measures to improve local air quality through the development and implementation of an AQAP, to reduce the impact on the health of those living and working within Southend-on-Sea City Council area.

Other Options

None. The Local Authority has a statutory duty to adopt an AQAP where an AQMA has been declared.

Note: This is an Executive Function

Not eligible for call-in as the matter is an urgent key decision

Cabinet Member: Cllr Davidson

Chairman: _____