

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

Wednesday, 5 February 2020

PRESENT: Councillor Nunn (Chair); Councillors J Hill, Hibbert and King

APOLOGIES: Councillor Larratt, Councillor Eldred, Councillor Hadland and Councillor Hallam

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Larratt, Eldred, Hadland and Hallam and from Francis Fernandes. Laurie Gould attended as the Deputy Monitoring Officer.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 22 January 2020 were agreed and signed by the Leader.

3. INTENTION TO HOLD PART OF THE MEETING IN PRIVATE IF NECESSARY

There was no intention to hold any part of the meeting in private.

4. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES

There were none.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Hill declared an interest in item 10 (Rectory Farm Land Disposal) as the ward Councillor.

6. ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

There were no issues arising from Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

7. FOUR WATERSIDE MASTERPLAN 2020

In the absence of Councillor Hadland, the Leader outlined the report updating Cabinet on the progress made on the Four Waterside Site. Councillor Stone noted the importance of the scheme and requested a Members' Briefing. The Chief Executive suggested that the briefing could also incorporate updates on other key sites. The Leader agreed to facilitate this.

RESOLVED:

- 2.1 Cabinet approved the first stage of the Four Waterside Masterplan proposal (the feasibility study) which sets the principles and the approach that will be taken to deliver a mixed-use development site on a key site located on the edge of Northampton Town Centre.
- 2.2 Cabinet noted the need for a development appraisal, which when complete will be referred back to Cabinet for consideration along with delivery advice setting out the most appropriate procurement strategy to secure a development partner or partners for the site.

8. REVIEW OF POLICIES SET OUT IN THE WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT CORE STRATEGY

The Deputy Monitoring Officer pointed out that the wording in recommendation 2.1 should be amended to refer to 'Cabinet' rather than 'this Council'. Cabinet agreed to make this amendment.

Councillor Hill as the relevant Cabinet Member outlined the report seeking approval for a review of policies in the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy (WNJCS).

Councillor Stone considered that these policies were very important in shaping the future and expressed disappointment that the Local Plan had not yet gone for inspection. She asked how Climate Emergency would be signified and conveyed concern regarding the issues of sustainable and affordable housing, and meeting the needs of gypsies, travellers and travelling show people.

Councillor Hill stated that the delay was unfortunate and due to issues beyond the Council's control, but it might enable some Climate Emergency issues to be added. This was a review of existing policies and outstanding issues would need to be considered by the unitary council.

RESOLVED:

- 2.1 Cabinet endorsed the review of policies in the West Northamptonshire Joint Core Strategy as set out in Appendix 1 to this report.

9. REVISION OF THE MEMORANDUM OF CO-OPERATION FOR THE WEST NORTHAMPTONSHIRE JOINT PLANNING AND INFRASTRUCTURE BOARD

Councillor Hill as the relevant Cabinet Member outlined the report seeking approval for the revised Memorandum of Co-operation between the partner councils, to be reviewed by the Shadow Council once it was in place.

Councillor Stone stated that opposition members were not currently part of the Board and needed to be better informed by being involved. Councillor Hill pointed out that the Board only had an advisory function; all decisions were referred back to Cabinet and Council.

RESOLVED:

- 2.1 Cabinet approved and agreed to re-sign the revised Memorandum of Co-operation, which is attached at Appendix 1 to this report, with the proviso that it will be reviewed once the Shadow Council for West Northamptonshire is in place.

10. RECTORY FARM LAND DISPOSAL

In the absence of Councillor Hadland, the Leader presented the report seeking approval for the disposal of Rectory Farmhouse by auction. This was an important part of funding for the adjacent community centre and an auction was expected to provide both a quick sale and the best price.

Councillor Birch declared an interest as a trustee of the Community Centre at Rectory Farm, and agreed that the farmhouse was in need of substantial investment. It was currently empty and a magnet for vandalism and anti-social behaviour. Councillor Birch expressed

thanks for the designation of the car park as part of the Community Centre.

Councillor Hill stated that the improvements to the Community Centre would be positive, and development of Rectory Farmhouse would be beneficial to the area.

RESOLVED:

Cabinet:

- 2.1 Agreed to Disposal of the Property, known as Rectory Farmhouse, by way of auction to achieve the best price reasonably obtainable for the area outlined in red on the plan at Annex 1;
- 2.2 Authorised the appointment of Auctioneers to dispose of the property in accordance with s.123 (1) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended);
- 2.3 Delegated authority to the Economic Growth and Regeneration Manager, in consultation with the Borough Secretary, Chief Finance Officer and Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise to finalise the terms of the disposal.

The meeting concluded at 6:20 pm