

CABINET held at ZOOM - [HTTPS://ZOOM.US/](https://zoom.us/), on TUESDAY, 9 MARCH 2021 at 7.00 pm

Present: Councillor J Lodge (Chair)
Councillors A Armstrong, C Day, J Evans, R Freeman,
N Hargreaves, P Lees, L Pepper and N Reeve

Officers in attendance: D French (Chief Executive), B Ferguson (Democratic Services Manager), R Harborough (Director - Public Services), A Knight (Assistant Director - Resources), J Reynolds (Lawyer) and A Webb (Director - Finance and Corporate Services)

Also present: Councillors N Gregory (Chair of the Scrutiny Committee), S Luck (Ward Member for Debden and Wimbish), R Pavitt (Uttlesford Independents' Group Leader) and M Tayler (Thaxted Independents' Group Leader)

CAB72 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Eke.

CAB73 MINUTES OF THE PREVIOUS MEETING

The minutes of the previous meeting were approved as a correct record, subject to the addition of **agreed and** to the final sentence of CAB68:

*Councillor Reeve **agreed and** said this is what Councillor Hargreaves had said earlier.*

CAB74 QUESTIONS OR STATEMENTS FROM NON-EXECUTIVE MEMBERS OF THE COUNCIL (STANDING ITEM)

Councillor Gregory, the Chair of Scrutiny Committee, informed Cabinet that two Scrutiny Committee meetings had taken place since the previous Cabinet meeting. He said the item that had dominated proceedings was the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan and the Committee held reservations regarding the length, specificity and lack of clarity contained within the document. He said Councillor LeCount had distilled the views of Committee Members, with the assistance of Councillors Dean and Sell, and this document had been sent to Councillor Reeve yesterday. He hoped Cabinet would give the Scrutiny Committee's comments the appropriate consideration.

Councillor Gregory gave his apologies at 7.10pm as he had to leave for another meeting.

CAB75 REPORT OF DELEGATED DECISIONS TAKEN BY CABINET MEMBERS

(STANDING ITEM)

Cabinet noted the Executive Decision made by the Leader regarding the appointment to the Voluntary Support Grant Committee – published on 11 February 2021.

CAB76 VOLUNTARY SUPPORT GRANTS

Cabinet noted the decision lists of the Voluntary Support Grant Committee meetings held on 15 and 23 February 2021.

CAB77 VOLUNTARY SUPPORT GRANTS: UTTLESFORD CITIZENS ADVICE

The Chair said the decision made by the VSG Committee to grant Uttlesford Citizens Advice Bureau £160,000 required formal approval of Cabinet.

Councillor Hargreaves proposed approval; this was duly seconded by Councillor Freeman.

The item was approved unanimously.

RESOLVED to approve the £160,000 grant to Uttlesford Citizens Advice.

CAB78 STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT AND COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

Councillor Evans presented the report on Statement of Community Involvement and the Community Engagement Strategy. He said both documents had been subject to public consultation and revisions had been applied to achieve greater clarity. The revised documentation had been considered by the Scrutiny Committee at its meeting on 16 February 2021. He said there had not been a high response rate to the public consultation exercise, although that could have been due to the technical nature of the document.

Councillor Evans proposed approval of the recommendation set out in the report.

Councillor Day seconded the proposal and said this was a first class document that outlined the engagement process from “cradle to grave”. It was also indicative of a number of technical documents that had been produced by the Planning Policy team in the previous three months.

Councillor Reeve concurred and said the Administration were meeting their goal of getting wider input into the Local Plan process.

The proposal was approved unanimously.

RESOLVED to approve the Statement of Community Involvement and the Community Engagement Strategy for publication and use

CAB79 BUDGET FORECAST OUTTURN - 2020/21 QUARTER 3

Councillor Hargreaves summarised the report on the Budget Forecast Outturn 2020/21 Quarter 3. He highlighted the General Fund and the predicted net underspend of £503,000 and the overspend of the Capital Programme of £89,948,000. Overall, he said the Council were in a favourable position in comparison to many other councils, and that he hoped the financial impact of the public health emergency would lessen as the year went on. He proposed approval of the recommendation set out in the report.

Councillor Armstrong seconded the proposal.

The proposal was approved unanimously.

RESOLVED to approve The General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme forecast outturn positions including the updated use of reserves and requested slippage for the Capital Programme.

CAB80 CORPORATE PLAN DELIVERY PLAN 2020/21 PROGRESS UPDATE

Councillor Reeve presented the report on the Corporate Pan Delivery Plan Progress update 2020/21. He referred to comments made by Councillor Gregory regarding too much detail earlier in the meeting and said the additional detail could be considered as beneficial to some people. He highlighted the progress outlined in the report, relating to areas such as the Local Plan, Economic Recovery, Climate Change Strategy and the related action plan, and said it demonstrated the enormous amount of work the Council was implementing on behalf of residents. He asked Members to note the progress update.

Councillor Day said the update showed how ambitious the Administration were in comparison to other Local Authorities operating through the pandemic. He said it was right to receive constructive criticism from the Scrutiny Committee but added that the Council deserved a “pat on the back” as Members and officers had ensured that services had continued despite the public health emergency.

Cabinet noted the progress update.

CAB81 CORPORATE PLAN DELIVERY PLAN 2021/22

Councillor Reeve presented the report on the Corporate Plan Delivery Plan (CPDP) 2021/22. He said the Plan had been robustly scrutinised at the Scrutiny Committee and he had taken note of their comments, but there would be no changes made to the CPDP. He proposed approval of the document.

In addition to the comments made by Councillor Gregory earlier in the meeting, 10 points had been submitted by Councillor LeCount the evening before. In summary, Councillor Reeve responded to these points as follows:

- The Administration had decided not to strip out “business as usual” items as there was a wish to provide a degree of continuity with the Administration’s agenda.
- There was a great deal of detail contained within the CPDP as the Administration wanted to show how each priority was progressing throughout the year. Whilst the Scrutiny Committee considered this a weakness, the Administration felt it was of benefit.
- Youth – more detail and measurable targets had been requested by the Committee. However, the Administration were satisfied that there was sufficient detail and the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Day, was aware of what was required. Progress would be reviewed mid-year.
- Corporate Change programme regarding the efficient running of the Council– the Committee felt more detail was required but Councillor Reeve said he was satisfied that the CPDP spelt out how to achieve the said programme and no change was required.
- Member training programme – the Administration would wait until the end of the pandemic before diverting from the current ‘ad hoc’ approach.
- The consequence of purchasing the Little Canfield site had not been included as an action within the CPDP but was encapsulated in the ‘Uttlesford moving forward’ project.

Councillor Reeve said there was a general theme running through all points that had been raised by Scrutiny and said he would stop there.

The Leader said Cabinet were minded to approve the CPDP as presented in the report, but Councillor Reeve would write to the Scrutiny Committee to formally respond to the points raised.

Councillor Lees thanked Councillor Reeve for his presentation and asked whether the CPDP would be reviewed in the late summer.

The Leader confirmed and said the CPDP would be reviewed mid-year.

Councillor Pepper said the document was live and some elements would be updated, such as the tree planting scheme she was working on within her portfolio.

Councillor Evans referenced the Local Plan process and said “locally led Development Corporations” would only be applicable if it was resolved that new communities were the way forward. He said developer contributions would also be looked at and a Scrutiny Task & Finish Group had been setup to explore the matter.

Councillor Day said Youth was the only new initiative included in the CPDP. It had been introduced due to concerns that young people would be particularly

impacted upon by the pandemic. However, he was pleased that young people would be consulted on the Local Plan process so their voices could be heard, and that further details would be released once young people's involvement had been scoped.

Councillor Armstrong seconded the proposal.

In response to a question from Councillor Reeve, the Chief Executive said the document was live and it would be helpful for both officers and Members for the Plan to be reviewed mid-year. She also confirmed that the intention was to revert to quarterly reports to monitor the progress of the CPDP.

The proposal was unanimously approved.

RESOLVED to approve the corporate plan delivery plan 2021/22, as set out in appendices A-D.

CAB82 CARVER BARRACKS RUNNING TRACK - EXTENSION TO LONGSTOP DATE

The Leader welcomed Councillor Luck, the relevant Ward Member for Debden and Wimbish, to speak on Item 12 Carver Barracks Running Track – Extension to Longstop date.

Councillor Luck said he understood the reasons for the delay to the running track project throughout 2020, and the subsequent need for an extension to the longstop date, but was pleased that a completion date was now in sight. He said his ward constituents were behind the project, and the running track conformed with the Administration's commitments to youth and sports provision in the district. Furthermore, the location of the track encouraged participants from Great Dunmow and Stansted, as well as Saffron Walden, although he said parking provision would be required. He said he was fully in support of the project.

Councillor Armstrong proposed to extend the Longstop date for the project to 31 December 2021 as recommended in the report.

The Leader seconded the proposal.

Councillor Evans said he was strongly in support of the project as there was a need for athletic facilities in the district. He knew of running clubs who would make great use of the track during the winter months.

The Leader said he had been informed that there was great intent from the Barracks to get the project completed, and they had been delayed for a variety of reasons, including personnel deployment to Covid-19 testing centres. He was satisfied it would be completed before the end of 2021.

The proposal was unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that the longstop date for the project is revised to 31 December 2021

CAB83 LAND AT THE SIDE OF PETLANDS, LITTLE WALDEN

Councillor Lees introduced the report regarding the Land at the side of Petlands, Little Walden and explained that the property in question had been sold under “right to buy” and, subsequently, planning consent had been given to develop part of the plot for a new dwelling. The land owner had now approached the Council with regard to the granting of a new right of way and authority was sought from Cabinet to proceed, on the basis that the land owner would bear all valuation, legal and survey costs of the transaction. She proposed approval of the recommendation in the report.

Councillor Day seconded the proposal.

The proposal was unanimously approved.

RESOLVED that Cabinet gives authority for Officers to negotiate and agree the terms of the proposed easement, subject to prior payment by the owner of the valuation fee.

. The meeting ended at 8.15pm.