

CABINET

Meeting held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Urban Road, Kirkby-in-Ashfield,

on Monday, 11th March, 2019 at 10.00 am

Present: Councillor Jason Zadrozny in the Chair;

Councillors Christian Chapman, Tom Hollis,
Robert Sears-Piccavey, Helen-Ann Smith and
John Wilmott.

Officers Present: Craig Bonar, Lynn Cain, Julie Clayton,
Carol Cooper-Smith, Ruth Dennis, Aimee Dobb,
Katherine Green, Peter Hudson, Mike Joy,
Theresa Hodgkinson, Robert Mitchell, Neil Oxby,
Paul Parkinson and Shane Wright.

In Attendance: Councillor Matthew Relf.

Richard Knight, Sue Knight and Maureen
Newton (Hucknall Heritage Society).

Jamie Beckett, Dave Mackey, Chris Metcalf and
Sophie Wilmott (Sutton Community Academy).

CA.77 Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary or Personal Interests and Non Disclosable Pecuniary/Other Interests

No declarations of interest were made.

CA.78 Minutes

RESOLVED

that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 18th February, 2019 be received and approved as a correct record.

At this point in the proceedings and in accordance with Council Procedure Rule 4 (Order of Business), the Chairman proposed an amendment to the order of the business bringing items 6, 7 and 8 forward on the agenda. Having put the suggestion to Cabinet, all Members present consented to this course of action.

CA.79 Proposed Hucknall Conservation Area

The Interim Director of Place and Communities sought Cabinet's approval to designate the new Conservation Area in Hucknall Town Centre as outlined in the report. Intensive work had been undertaken to gather evidence to justify

the area being designated for its special architectural and historical interest and a public consultation exercise had been carried out which had garnered over 200 responses.

Members of the Hucknall Heritage Society, Richard Knight, Sue Knight and Maureen Newton addressed the Cabinet and informed Members that they had been campaigning tirelessly since 2004 to endeavour to halt any further demolition of historically important buildings in Hucknall and therefore greatly welcomed the Conservation Area proposals.

The Chairman took the opportunity to thank the Heritage Society for their hard work and ongoing commitment towards Hucknall Town Centre and reminded Cabinet that the Council was currently in discussions with the new owners of the former Byron Cinema regarding their exciting proposals for its refurbishment.

Members considered the alternative option of declining to designate the Hucknall Town Centre Conservation Area. However, the option would carry a risk that the architectural and historic character of the area would be eroded, or would continue to erode, and significant buildings and mature trees would be vulnerable to demolition or removal. Not designating could also undermine the distinct heritage and environmental quality of the area.

RESOLVED

that the designation of the Hucknall Town Centre Conservation Area be approved and implemented in accordance with legislative requirements.

Reasons:

Local Planning Authorities are under a duty to review whether any parts of their area should be designated as conservation areas. Officers in Development Management and Conservation teams have identified that the Town Centre of Hucknall is an area of special architectural and historical interest and justifies being designated as a Conservation Area. A public consultation has been held on the proposal and the majority of responses received by the Council were in support.

Designation would provide a planning control to enable the conservation and enhancement of the special historic and architectural interest of the defined area. Designation would also provide controls over the demolition of buildings and structures and the planning authority will be able to exercise greater control over the design of new buildings, structures and extensions. The designation would confer a level of protection for trees that are not currently protected.

CA.80 Sutton-in-Ashfield Town Centre Masterplan

The Interim Director for Place and Communities presented the results of the public consultation exercise for the Sutton Town Centre Spatial Masterplan. The Masterplan, if adopted, would provide a framework to enable the Town Centre to respond positively to future challenges and social changes including the protection of its architectural and focal places.

Chris Mackey, Sutton Community Academy Principal and two students, Sophie Wilmott and Jamie Beckett, thanked the Cabinet for their invite and spoke about the changing face of the Town Centre and possible solutions for improving it as a destination in future years. Cabinet were impressed with the suggestions and expressed a desire to meet with students again to discuss ideas in more detail.

Chris Metcalf, the Academy's Sports Centre Manager and Treasurer of the Sutton Town Centre Group, spoke about his ongoing commitment towards long term community development to enable future opportunities for children, families and businesses alike. The Sutton Town Centre Group were also active with local businesses and were due to meet for a business breakfast during April 2019.

Members considered the alternative option of declining to adopt the Masterplan but this was not recommended as the Masterplan was needed to futureproof the town centre and provide a framework for investment and development.

On conclusion of the discussion, the Leader thanked Sutton Community Academy for taking the time out to attend the Cabinet meeting and reiterated his desire to continue to develop a productive and rewarding dialogue between both organisations.

RESOLVED that

- a) the representations made to the draft Sutton Town Centre Spatial Masterplan and its accompanying paper 'Sutton Town Centre – Rethink, Repurpose, Remake' be noted and the proposed changes identified in the Consultation Statement be approved;
- b) the Sutton Town Centre Spatial Masterplan document be adopted as a basis for future action in Sutton Town Centre;
- c) authority be delegated to the Interim Director of Place and Communities, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to make any minor changes to the Masterplan prior to publication;
- d) authority be delegated to the Interim Director of Place and Communities, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to produce an action plan.

Reasons:

1. To provide a framework which will allow Sutton Town Centre to respond positively to the economic and social changes in the area.
2. To provide a framework for future private and public investment in Sutton Town Centre.
3. To inform decisions in the emerging Local Plan.

CA.81 Approval to Submit Expression of Interest for the Future High Street Fund

The Interim Director of Place and Communities requested approval to submit an initial Expression of Interest to the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government, for the Government's Future High Streets Fund for Sutton Town Centre (by the deadline of 22nd March, 2019.)

It was announced in the New Year that the Future High Streets Fund would be offering £675m to District and City Councils to enable them to invest in their town centres and make them fit for the future and resistant to change. The Fund would be looking for local authority bids that can show a greater range of uses to add vibrancy to their town centres e.g. residential, leisure, commercial, events and culture.

Cabinet acknowledged that the Sutton Town Centre Masterplan had come at a good time and would influence the shape and development of the bid. However, caution was exercised as it was accepted that there would be an extremely competitive process taking place for access to the funding.

Members also discussed the additional Stronger Town Funding which was due to be distributed through the Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP) and the ongoing need for representatives to speak up for Ashfield and endeavour to secure its rightful share of any funding available.

Members considered the alternative option of declining to submit an Expression of Interest for the Future High Streets Fund but acknowledged that any opportunity to apply for Government funding for Sutton in Ashfield would be ultimately lost.

RESOLVED that

- a) an Expression of Interest for the Government's Future High Streets Fund be submitted in respect of Sutton in Ashfield Town Centre by the deadline of 22nd March, 2019;
- b) authority be delegated to the Interim Director of Place and Communities, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, for the dispatch of the Expression of Interest as appropriate;
- c) authority be also delegated to the Interim Director of Place and Communities, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to commission appropriate expert support for the bid if required.

Reason:

Approval is required from Cabinet to permit the Council to submit an Expression of Interest bid to the Government's Future High Streets Fund by the deadline of 22nd March, 2019.

(During consideration of this item, Councillor Tom Hollis left the room at 11.15 a.m. and returned to the meeting at 11.17 a.m.)

CA.82 Scrutiny Consideration of CCTV

The Service Manager for Scrutiny and Democratic Services presented the recommendations from Scrutiny Panel B in relation to the Council's CCTV provision and its impact within the communities of Ashfield.

Two visits had been made to the CCTV Control Room at Sherwood Lodge to view both daytime and night-time operations and an informal Working Group meeting had taken place with representatives from Planning, Licensing, Communications, Community Safety, Commercial Development and the Police to further consider key lines of enquiry that had emerged from earlier Panel discussions.

It was acknowledged through the informal Working Group that any commercial development opportunities were not available at the present time and that the Council could better utilise its communications team to raise awareness of the Council's CCTV provision and improve the public's perception of its remit and benefits.

Cabinet were also informed that Panel Members had raised concerns that the out-of-hours call handling service, as facilitated by the Sherwood Lodge Control Room, could be better managed to enable the Operatives to spend less time responding to non-urgent calls and more time monitoring CCTV. The Control Room handled around 3,000 out-of-hours calls for the Council in 2018 and although many calls were pertinent, the majority concerned non-CCTV related issues such as Council Tax enquiries and repairs thus diverting staff on numerous occasions from their main duties.

The Chairman took the opportunity to thank the Service Manager for Scrutiny and Democratic Services and the Scrutiny Research and Support Officer for their detailed, informative report and reiterated the Council's commitment towards the ongoing delivery of an effective and responsive CCTV provision.

RESOLVED that

- a) an investigation into the cost and benefits of upgrading cameras located on the Council's parks to incorporate HD/infra-red capabilities and to continue exploring new advances in camera technology (both mobile and fixed), be approved;
- b) an evaluation exercise be undertaken without delay to consider the relocation of the three cameras identified within the report as being underperforming;
- c) public awareness of the Council's CCTV provision be enhanced via all available platforms including social media, website and press releases;
- d) an ongoing commitment be secured towards increasing collaboration with the Police and gaining more analytical support from them as required;
- e) the feasibility and benefits of installing a call filtering system at the Sherwood Lodge Control Room to facilitate more time monitoring cameras and responding to relevant issues rather than answering a diverse range of non-urgent out-of-hours calls, be explored;

- f) further work be undertaken to enhancing the CPO work tasking programme based on real time CCTV evidence as reported, thus ensuring the correct level of enforcement capabilities are primarily available at any required point of need;
- g) the conclusions of the additional review of locations and camera upgrades be reported back to Scrutiny Panel B in due course.

Reason:

Consideration of Ashfield District Council's CCTV scheme was added to the Scrutiny Workplan in September 2017 for review.

(During consideration of this item, Councillor Robert Sears-Piccavey left the room at 11.24 a.m. and returned to the meeting at 11.26 a.m. Councillor Christian Chapman also left the meeting at 11.35 a.m.)

CA.83 Scrutiny Consideration of Unauthorised Encampment Protocol

The Leader introduced the report and the recommendations made by Scrutiny Panel A with regard to its review of the draft Ashfield District Council Unauthorised Encampments Protocol. The Panel had recommended, following the review, that the Council should take a more conciliatory stance towards dealing with unauthorised encampments with an emphasis on negotiation rather than enforcement action.

Having considered the report in detail, the Leader informed the Cabinet that he did not fully concur with this methodology and was of the belief that a dual approach to tackling the issue (both negotiation and enforcement running alongside each other) would be far more effective. Cabinet concurred with this course of action and felt that recommendations 1 to 4 should just be noted at this stage.

The Leader continued by giving a brief overview of the challenges and difficulties that were faced by the Council in 2018 when they were forced to deal with two unauthorised encampments on a Council owned park and football pitch. The costs of the clean-up were significant and tensions were running very high within the local communities and many residents felt fearful.

It was agreed at that time that the Council needed to take a tough stance to address the issues and this involved swift enforcement action to ensure the matters was resolved without delay. The Leader also commented that he felt the draft Unauthorised Encampments Protocol should be allowed to acclimatise for at least a year before it came forward for further review.

The Scrutiny Research and Support Officer gave a synopsis of the Panel's investigations and the subsequent Members' view that swift enforcement action without any prior negotiation consistently compounded the problems associated with unauthorised encampments and made matters ultimately worse. The Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire representative who attended a meeting of the Panel also concurred with this view and felt that negotiation prior to any enforcement action was preferable.

However, the Leader and all present at the meeting acknowledged that the review had generated some interesting and constructive debate and it had spotlighted an important issue for the Council. Mature cross-party debate had been welcomed and the Panel A Members and Scrutiny Officers were thanked once again for their contribution.

RESOLVED that

- a) recommendations 1 to 4 (outlined below), as submitted by Scrutiny Panel A, be received and noted at this present time:
- *the Protocol be amended to include two potential processes for dealing with Unauthorised Encampments; the primary approach focussing on negotiation, and the secondary approach focussing on enforcement action;*
 - *Officers be given the appropriate delegation to use their professional judgement and expertise, along with set criteria, to assess which process to utilise on a case by case basis;*
 - *the possibility of utilising the services of external delivery partners such as Rural Community Action Nottinghamshire via Service Level Agreements in supporting the actions of the Council to negotiate with the occupiers of unauthorised encampments be considered;*
 - *Officers continue to enhance their work with North Nottinghamshire Travellers Group to ensure effective and constructive collaboration between the member Councils in identifying further sites within the County;*
- b) it be agreed that the Unauthorised Encampment Protocol be reviewed in order to assess its effectiveness after one full year of operation;
- c) officers be thanked for their work in drafting the revised Unauthorised Encampment Protocol.

Reason:

Consideration of the draft Unauthorised Encampment Protocol was added to the Scrutiny Workplan in October 2018.

CA.84 Budget Monitoring (position to end of January 2019)

The Cabinet Member (Inward) presented the report which detailed the current 2018/19 forecast outturn position for the General Fund, HRA and Capital Programme based on actual expenditure and income to the end of January 2019 and forecast income and expenditure to the end of March 2019. It was noted that it would be the last budget monitoring report to Cabinet until the 2018/19 outturn report in July 2019.

Cabinet were asked to note that the valuation of a £707k, outlined in the first recommendation on page 137 of the report, was a typing error and should in fact read £662k.

Due to the fact that the report was for information only, Members did not have any alternative options to consider.

RESOLVED that

- a) the forecasted variances against revised budgets for the General Fund (underspend of £662k) and Housing Revenue Account (underspend of £188k), be noted;
- b) the planned use of £317k of Returned Business Rates from the Nottinghamshire Pool and £59k Business Rates Returned Levy from Central Government to support the 2019/20 General Fund Budget, be noted;
- c) the 2018/19 Revenue Outturn position which may further improve dependent upon the timing of Capital Receipts and their use in accordance with the Capital Receipts Flexibility Strategy, as approved by Council in October 2018, be noted;
- d) the significant forecast under-spend in the Legal and Governance Directorate which includes the financial impact of the Alliance Healthcare court case being settled, be noted.

Reason:

To report to those charged with Governance the financial position to January 2019 and comply with the Council's Financial Regulations.

(During consideration of this item, Councillor Helen-Ann Smith left the room at 12.00 noon and returned to the meeting at 12.05 p.m.)

The meeting closed at 12.06 pm

Chairman.