

Cabinet

Tuesday, 5 December 2023

Decisions

Set out below is a summary of the decisions taken at the meeting of the Cabinet held on Tuesday, 5 December 2023. Decisions made by the Cabinet will be subject to call-in. Recommendations made to the Council are not subject to call-in. The wording used does not necessarily reflect the actual wording that will appear in the minutes.

If you have any queries about any matters referred to in this decision sheet please contact Pippa Turvey.

1. 2023-24 Quarter Two Performance Report

Cabinet:

- (a) Noted the Key Performance Indicator results and comments at Appendix A to the report and the progress in delivery of 2023-24 Business Plan outputs at Appendix B to the report.

Options Considered

No alternative options were considered.

Reasons for Decision

The decision was required to enable management and members to understand the organisation's performance. The information included within performance reports contributed to the evidence base for the ongoing review of priorities and enabled, where appropriate, redirection of resources to reflect emerging priorities and address areas of concern.

2. Rural England Prosperity Fund

Cabinet gave authority to proceed with proposal of fund delivery to:

- i) Allocate £292,034 of the fund to a series of capital projects within the district in the current financial year (2023/24).
- ii) Allocate £876,101 of the fund to a Grant scheme available for communities and businesses to apply for in financial year 2024/25.
- iii) Agree governance arrangement, grant funding level, and match funding levels outlined in the report.

Options Considered

- 1. To proceed with Capital project and grants scheme as outlined in the report.

2. Do not accept outlined proposal, and not proceed with the REPF.
3. Do not proceed with Capital Projects and risk lose funding for financial year 23/24 and proceed with grants scheme for 24/25.
4. Propose other capital projects that are ready to start and could spend the REPF before the end of March 2024 to add to the capital projects list.

Reasons for Decision

1. Due to delays on receiving clear guidelines on how local authorities were able to spend the funds, dividing the funding across a programme of capital projects in 23/24 and a grant scheme programme in 24/25 would allow the Council to allocate and spend funds within the specified timeframes set out by Department for Levelling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC).
2. On the 17 November 2023 the DLUHC indicated that there was an opportunity for spend to be rolled over into the financial year, however, this may impact access to next financial year funding. It would be the preferred option to proceed with projects as soon as possible.

3. Health and Wellbeing Strategy Refresh 2024-2028

Cabinet approved the Health and Wellbeing Strategy and its appendices.

Options Considered

Recommended option – for Cabinet to agree the new Health and Wellbeing Strategy 2024-28 and its appendices.

Alternative option – for Cabinet to make recommendations for further alterations to the new Health and Wellbeing Strategy for 2024-28, providing details.

Reasons for Decision

The original Health and Wellbeing Strategy was developed in July 2019 prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, and prior to the Health and Care Act July 2022 (which saw the formation of 42 Integrated Care Systems across England). A cost-of-living crisis had also since developed, therefore the Strategy was no longer reflective of the environment in which people now lived, worked and aged.

The pandemic had created greater inequalities across a range of factors, affecting people's living standards and health outcomes, which had prompted a greater focus for the Council on cost-of-living support for the most vulnerable.

Working as a signatory to the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Integrated Care System (CPICS), the Council's activities must align with achieving the goals outlined in the CPICS Health and Care Strategy to create greater synergy in achieving shared goals.

4. Proposed Fees & Charges 2024/2025

Cabinet:

- (a) Approved the fees and charges as detailed in Appendix A to the report to take effect from 1 April 2024 (unless otherwise stated) or the earliest feasible date thereafter.
- (b) Noted the proposed variations to fees and charges in comparison to the prevailing inflation rate detailed in the report.

Options Considered

While the Council could choose to do so, the option of not adopting the revised fees and charges from 1 April 2024 was not considered to be appropriate. The Council was required by law to set a balanced budget and the additional income from fees and charges contributed to this, albeit marginally. In determining the new fee scales, due regard had been given to the sensitivity of price increases on service demand.

Reasons for Decision

To ensure that the Council received income from fees and charges where allowable to contribute to the funding of services, to enable discretionary services to be provided and to assist the Council in preparing its Revenue Budget for 2024/2025.

5. General Fund Revenue Bids and Savings

Cabinet:

1. Noted the growth bids put forward (both one off and ongoing), detailed at Appendix A and B to the report and approved those for 2024/2025 should be included in the Budget to be proposed in February 2024.
2. Noted the proposed range of service efficiency savings/additional income detailed in Appendix C to the report and approved those for 2024/2025 should be included in the Budget to be proposed in February 2024.

Options Considered

The option existed of not approving new revenue funding bids and savings.

Reasons for Decision

To enable the Cabinet to consider the new revenue bids and savings for 2024/2025.

6. Capital Programme Update and New Bids

Cabinet:

- (a) Considered the capital programme bids for new projects outlined at Appendix A to the report and approved the new capital schemes.

(b) Recommended to Full Council the revised capital programme for the period 2023/2024 to 2028/2029, at Appendix B to the report for the General Fund and at Appendix C to the report for the Housing Revenue Account, to reflect the new scheme bids, amendments to the programme and the reprofiling of expenditure identified in the report.

Options Considered

The option existed of not approving new capital funding bids.

Reasons for Decision

To enable the Cabinet to consider the new capital project bids for 2024/2025 and the updated capital programme incorporating new items and reprofiling of expenditure.

7. 2023-2024 Revenue and Capital Budget Monitoring (Quarter 2)

Cabinet:

(a) Noted the 2023/24 revenue position against the approved revenue budget to date shown in Appendix B to the report, the projected major variances with reasons for these variances at Appendices C1 to C7 to the report and the action being taken to address the underlying issues.

(b) Noted the latest Capital Programme 2023/24 position [and variances, if any] as shown in Appendix D to the report.

Options Considered

The report provided monitoring information to ensure awareness of budget trends and emerging budget issues.

Reasons for Decision

To advise the Cabinet of the latest monitoring information in respect of the 2023/24 revenue and capital budgets and emerging budget issues, for the second quarter period to 30 September 2023.

8. Response to the Uttlesford Draft Local Plan 2023-2041 (Regulation 18) Consultation

Cabinet:

(a) Agreed the proposed joint response to the Draft Uttlesford Local Plan 2021 – 2041 (Regulation 18) Consultation.

(b) Agreed that any subsequent material amendments be made by the Lead Member for Planning.

(c) Agreed that any subsequent minor amendments and editing changes that do not materially affect the content be delegated to the Joint Director of Planning and Economic Development in consultation with the Lead Member for Planning.

Options Considered

The options available to members were:

- a. Agree the proposed response to the consultation without amendments.
- b. Agree the proposed response to the consultation with amendments.
- c. Decide not to submit a response to the consultation – this option was not recommended as the plan would progress without awareness of potential impacts on Greater Cambridge.

Reasons for Decision

The contents of the Draft Uttlesford Local Plan 2021 – 2041 (Regulation 18) Consultation, referred to in the report, could in principle impact on Greater Cambridge and have implications for the emerging joint Greater Cambridge Local Plan. The proposed response sought to minimise negative and maximise any positive impacts of Uttlesford's Local Plan on Greater Cambridge.