

CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 6 MAY 2020

DECISIONS

Set out below is a summary of the decisions taken at the meeting of the Cabinet held on Wednesday, 6 May 2020. 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 Ian Senior.

1. **TRANSFER OF COMMUNITY ASSETS POLICY**

By affirmation, Cabinet approved the draft Community Assets Transfer Policy, attached at Appendix A to the report from the Chief Executive,, as the basis for considering requests for the transfer of community assets to relevant community-based organisations.

Options Considered: The option of not adopting the Community Asset Transfer Policy is not considered to be appropriate. Local authorities are accountable to their communities for the management of resources and local politicians and officers operate within local governance frameworks of checks and balances to ensure that decision-making is lawful, informed by objective advice, transparent and consultative. Good governance means that proper arrangements are in place to ensure that an authority's intended objectives are achieved and determining an appropriate framework for the consideration of the potential transfer of community assets to relevant organisations must be a key commitment to ensure that the Council has regard to its financial obligations and that it responds efficiently and effectively to service needs.

Reason for Decision: To determine an appropriate framework for the consideration of requests and the basis upon which the potential future transfer of community assets to relevant organisations is made.

2. **COUNCIL TAX DISCRETIONARY REDUCTIONS POLICY**

By affirmation, Cabinet approved the Council Tax Discretionary Reduction 13a Policy as set out in Appendix B to the report from the Head of Finance.

1. **Options Considered:** Adopt the revised version of the policy
2. defer adoption of the revised policy pending further revision, if it is felt that this is required

Reason for Decision: To ensure fair and consistent decision making, the Council requires a policy that outlines the process and procedure by which discretionary reductions of Council Tax may be sought.

The decision-making process outlined in the previous version of the policy did not facilitate expedient decision making as it required all applications to be determined by Cabinet, which itself requires a degree of forward planning and scheduling of matters for consideration. Equally, the public nature of Cabinet decision-making is not conducive to the requirement for confidentiality and sensitivity around the personal circumstances of individuals, which will generally require documentary evidence of the financial situation, amongst other things.

Since the previous policy was adopted, the Valuation Tribunal has determined that it does have jurisdiction to entertain appeals relating to any Council's decision to refuse discretionary relief. This has been updated in the revised policy.

In response to the COVID-19 emergency, the Government has provided funding to Local Authorities to provide to a hardship fund discount, to be delivered under the Council's discretionary powers under section 13a(1)(c) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992. Details of how this will be delivered have also been incorporated into the policy.

3. **SHARED SERVICES BUSINESS PLANS**

By affirmation, Cabinet authorised the Shared Services Management Board to approve final amendments to the Business Plans set out in the appendices, namely

- 3C ICT
- 3C Legal
- Greater Cambridge Shared Planning Service
- Internal Audit
- Greater Cambridge Shared Waste Service

in line with comments received from all three partner councils.

Options Considered: An option could be not to support the documents or to recommend amendments. Any major amendments would be required to be considered and agreed by each of the partner Councils.

Reason for Decision: The Shared Services Agreement requires business plans to be approved every year. The Business Plans ensure the services adhere to the original objectives and contribute towards the partner councils' strategic objectives. The Shared Service Business Plans provide direction and set out how each will meet agreed business cases targets and contribute to delivery of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Corporate Plan. However, given that three Councils are commenting on these shared plans, a mechanism must be put in place to incorporate those comments. Delegating authority to the Shared Service Management Board will enable final amendments to be made to the Business Plans in line with comments received from all three partner Councils.

4. **SHARED SERVICES BUSINESS PLANS**

By affirmation, Cabinet authorised the Shared Services Management Board to approve final amendments to the Business Plan set out in the confidential appendix in line with comments received from all three partner councils

Options Considered: An option could be not to support the documents or to recommend amendments. Any major amendments would be required to be considered and agreed by each of the partner Councils.

Reason for Decision: The Shared Services Agreement requires business plans to be approved every year. The Business Plans ensure the services adhere to the original objectives and contribute towards the partner councils' strategic objectives. The Shared Service Business Plans provide direction and set out how each will meet agreed business cases targets and contribute to delivery of the South Cambridgeshire District Council Corporate Plan. However, given that three Councils are commenting on these shared plans, a mechanism must be put in place to incorporate those comments.

Delegating authority to the Shared Service Management Board will enable final amendments to be made to the Business Plans in line with comments received from all three partner Councils.

5. MILTON COUNTRY PARK FINANCIAL SUPPORT

By affirmation, Cabinet recommended to Full Council that

- (a) South Cambridgeshire District Council issues a conditional grant of £50,000 to the charitable Trust responsible for operating Milton Country Park in two equal instalments of £25,000, the first being advanced in May 2020 and the second no earlier than September 2020;
- (b) The first instalment be subject to the Head of Finance reviewing the Trust's current financial position via bank statements; and
- (c) The second instalment be subject to the Head of Finance reviewing the Trust's Management Accounts in addition to business efficiency measures, fundraising efforts and revised cashflow forecast.

Options Considered: As specified in the confidential report.

Reason for Decision: As specified in the confidential report.