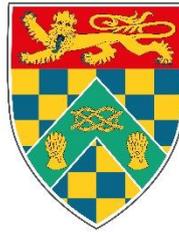


Minutes

Cabinet

Tuesday, 2 March 2021



**SOUTH
KESTEVEN
DISTRICT
COUNCIL**

Meeting held virtually by Skype

The Leader: Councillor Kelham Cooke, The Leader of the Council (Chairman)

The Deputy Leader: Councillor Barry Dobson, The Deputy Leader of the Council (Vice-Chairman)

Cabinet Members present

Councillor Annie Mason, Cabinet Member for Communities

Councillor Dr Peter Moseley, Cabinet Member for Commercial and Operations

Councillor Robert Reid, Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning

Councillor Adam Stokes, Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources

Councillor Rosemary Trollope-Bellew, Cabinet Member for Culture and Visitor Economy

Non-Cabinet Members present

Councillor Phil Dilks

Councillor Mike Exton

Councillor Ian Selby

Councillor Ray Wootten

Officers

Chief Executive (Karen Bradford)

Assistant Chief Executive, Housing Delivery (Ken Lyon)

Interim Director of Finance/Section 151 Officer (Richard Wyles)

Strategic Director Commercial and Operations (Gary Smith)

Interim Assistant Director of Housing (Chris Stratford)

Director of Law and Governance (Shahin Ismail)

Acting Principal Democratic Officer (Shelley Thirkell)

Democratic Officer (Lucy Bonshor)

65. Register of attendance and apologies for absence

All Cabinet Members were present.

The Leader referred to the Budget for 2021/22 which had been approved by Council on 1 March 2021. He thanked all the Cabinet Members for their contribution to the Budget and also the support from the Corporate Leadership Team and the Section 151 Officer.

66. Disclosure of Interests (if any)

None disclosed.

67. Minutes of the previous meeting

The minutes of the meeting held on 2 February 2021 were agreed as a correct record.

68. Procurement of New Build Works

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning presented the report which sought approval to award a contract to carry out works on the development of 12 Council properties using the Blue Skies Consortium Framework.

The development proposal was the first scheme from the revised new build programme for new Council house provision. The two sites were at Bourne and Stamford and were former Council owned garage sites and would provide facilities for those in housing need. The new builds would contain specialist facilities such as wet rooms, alarms and wider doorway access points and would be exempt from the Right to Buy regulations. It was noted that the sites did present additional abnormal costs as outlined in the report.

Consideration had been given to housing needs and this had been achieved through the Strategic Housing Market Needs assessment data, local housing need assessments and the current waiting list priorities for the two areas.

The timing of the report and the Cabinet's decision was critical to enable the one for one receipts to fund the scheme. The build contract was anticipated to be 12 months subject to pre contract processes being complete by April 2021.

The Leader stated that meeting the housing needs of residents was one of the key priorities contained within the Councils Corporate Plan for both the public and private sector and stated that the proposed contractor was an exceptional local contractor.

Other Cabinet Members supported the proposal for the housing which was needed within the district.

On being put to the vote, it was **AGREED:**

To approve the award of a contract to D Brown Building Limited for carrying out the development of 12 Council properties, using the Blue Skies Consortium Framework with a maximum contract value of £1,820,000 to allow works to start no later than April 2021.

69. Matters Referred to Cabinet by the Council and the Overview and Scrutiny Committees

The Leader referred to a recommendation that had been submitted from the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Committee following the meeting held on 26

January 2021. The recommendation asked Cabinet to investigate the breakdown of costs and benefit for each Council office facility for the provision of secure bike storage, including shower facilities and pool cycle opportunities.

The Leader was happy to support the recommendation and this was seconded by the Cabinet Member for Commercial and Operations. However, the Cabinet Member for Commercial and Operations did urge caution in respect of the timing of the work due to work currently being undertaken due to the pandemic.

On being put to the vote, it was **AGREED:**

To investigate the breakdown of costs and benefit for each Council Office facility to provide secure bike storage, including shower facilities, and to include pool cycle opportunities at the main Council Offices.

70. Key and Non-Key Decisions taken under Delegated Powers

The Leader of the Council presented his report on Key and Non-Key decisions taken since the last meeting of the Cabinet. One Non-Key decision had been taken in relation to the lease of the ground floor unit, Sheep Market, Stamford, which had been taken on 15 February 2021.

71. Representations and questions from Non Cabinet Members

A Non-Cabinet Member referred to a question which he asked the Leader at the last Cabinet meeting to which the Leader at the time did not respond to. The Non-Cabinet Member had submitted a Freedom of Information (FOI) request and had, had to wait 4 weeks for a response. He asked if the protocol for asking questions had changed.

The Leader replied that at the time the question was asked he did not have the information available to respond to the Member. The FOI request had been completed within the timescale allocated. He stated that any Non-Cabinet Member could ask a question at a Cabinet meeting, this had not changed. He stated that notification of a question before a Cabinet meeting could help with a more comprehensive response. It was noted that not all questions could be answered at the time they were asked.

A Non-Cabinet Member who had lost connection at the recent Council meeting (1 March 2021), congratulated the Cabinet Member for Finance and Resources and the Leader for their work on the budget. He also made reference to the fact that the Council Tax was the second lowest in the County.

The Leader thanked the Non-Cabinet Member and referred to the 8,000+ residents who had accessed the hardship fund.

72. Cabinet Forward Plan 16 March 2021 to 15 March 2022

Cabinet noted the Forward Plan for the period 16 March 2021 to 15 March 2022.

73. Unveiling of the Statute of the Late Baroness Thatcher

The Leader stated that following the decision made by Cabinet at the meeting on 1 December 2021 to underwrite the cost of the unveiling of the Baroness Thatcher Statue up to £100,000 from the Local Priorities Reserve. He could confirm that due to ongoing delays in respect of the unveiling date and as a result of the ongoing Covid-19 restrictions, he had confidence that all the funds for the event would now be raised through donations. He therefore confirmed that there would be no requirement for any forward funding or the use of the Local Priorities Reserve allocation of £100,000. He proposed that the budget be updated accordingly to reflect this. The proposal was seconded.

On being put to the vote, it was **AGREED:**

That there will no longer be a requirement to set aside funding from the Local Priorities Reserve in the sum of £100,000 to forward fund or underwrite the costs in respect of the unveiling of the Baroness Thatcher Statue event and the forecast movements from the Local Priorities Reserve as presented to Council on 1 March 2021 be updated accordingly.

74. Strategic Partnership Housing Capital Investment

This item was dealt with under Special Urgency Provisions due to the need to get the contracts in place as soon as possible.

The Monitoring Officer clarified the position in relation to the report and confirmed that it was not exempt.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning presented the report which concerned a new initiative to enhance and support resource limitations within the Housing Technical Support Section to deliver critical housing capital works.

These works included key housing compliance activities, the first three elements were:

- Fire risk assessment works.
- Interim gas contract work arrangements.
- The window and door programme.

The initial proposal would be for a 12 month pilot partnership with a detailed review on outputs and quality of service being reported to the Rural and Communities Overview and Scrutiny Committee, together with the potential to look at a longer term partnership.

The Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning then detailed the rates of work which included project management work and the fees payable with a maximum cap of £50,000. The combined process of procurement and project management was to reduce time for project works overall.

The initiative would contribute to reducing risks of not delivering the housing capital works programme. The necessary due diligence would be undertaken accordingly in respect of the Company which was wholly owned by Kent County Council.

A Cabinet Member queried the route being taken in respect of the initiative to which the Chief Executive replied and confirmed that it had been checked thoroughly by the Monitoring Officer in respect of the Contract and Procurement Procedure Rules. Advice had also be sought from Legal Services Lincolnshire.

On being put to the vote, it was **AGREED**:

1. That Cabinet approves three contracts to be placed with GEN2 for the following works:
 - i. Procurement and project management specialist support for the implementation of the Fire Risk Assessments works up to a value of £7,000.
 - ii. Procurement and project management specialist support for the renewal of the Gas contract up to a value of £20,000.
 - iii. Procurement and project management specialist support for the Windows and Doors capital programme up to a value of £22,000.
2. That Cabinet delegates approval to enter into the contracts to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Planning, the Monitoring Officer and the s151 Officer.

75. Close of meeting

The meeting closed at 14:34pm.