

CABINET

MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 8 SEPTEMBER 2016

AT 3.30 PM

IN THE COUNCIL CHAMBER, WILLITON

Present:

Councillor A Trollope-Bellew Leader

Councillor M Chilcott
Councillor S Pugsley
Councillor D J Westcott

Councillor K Mills
Councillor K Turner

Members in Attendance:

Councillor S Dowding
Councillor B Maitland-Walker

Councillor B Heywood
Councillor J Parbrook

Officers in Attendance:

Assistant Chief Executive (B Lang)
Director Housing and Communities (J Barrah)
Assistant Director Energy Infrastructure (A Goodchild)
CIM Fund Manager (L Redston)
Asset Manager (T Child)
Finance Manager/Section 151 Officer (J Nacey)
Programme Manager (S Tomlinson)
Meeting Administrator (K Kowalewska)

CAB22 Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors M Dewdney and C Morgan.

CAB23 Minutes of the Meeting held on 13 July 2016

(Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held on 13 July 2016 - circulated with the Agenda.)

RESOLVED that the Minutes of the Meeting of Cabinet held on 13 July 2016 be confirmed as a correct record.

CAB24 Declarations of Interest

Members present at the meeting declared the following personal interests in their capacity as a Member of a County, Parish or Town Council:

Name	Minute No.	Member of	Action Taken
Councillor A Trollope-Bellew	All	Crowcombe	Spoke and voted
Councillor K Turner	All	Brompton Ralph	Spoke and voted
Councillor D Westcott	All	Watchet	Spoke and voted
Councillor B Maitland-Walker	All	Carhampton	Spoke
Councillor J Parbrook	All	Minehead	Spoke

CAB25 Public Participation

Item 7 HPC Planning Obligations Board – Allocations of CIM Funding

Councillor Anne Fraser, Ward Member for North Petherton emphasised the importance of the Southern Bridgwater and North Petherton Community Mitigation Scheme to everyone who lived in the vicinity and to those who travelled along the A38 between North Petherton and Bridgwater. The volume of traffic along the route had significantly increased and the safety of road users was paramount. It was an absolute necessity to provide an alternative route for pedestrians and cyclists away from the A38. She urged Members to support the scheme as it would make a significant difference to everyone who lived and worked in the area.

Councillor Leigh Redman, Somerset County Council Labour member for Bridgwater South spoke in support of both applications and was keen to ensure that negative impacts of the Hinkley project were mitigated as early as possible. The Bridgwater Town Centre Support Scheme would bring huge benefits by delivering a range of initiatives, and was supported by traders and shoppers. The provision of a footpath and traffic calming would provide a safer route for all who used it and would be greatly used. Both bids were seen to be a massive step towards supporting the community.

Councillor Alan Bradford, Mayor of North Petherton Town Council advised the Southern Bridgwater and North Petherton Community Mitigation Scheme was fully supported by the community. The funding would provide appropriate and important mitigation against the impacts of the HPC project which would continue and increase into the next phase of works, and the bid would address the impacts on the quality of life of residents in the area.

Councillor Richard Brown, Somerset County Councillor for North Petherton spoke on the Southern Bridgwater and North Petherton Community Mitigation Scheme and advised that being adjacent to the main route for HGV deliveries posed an increased risk to residents. The scheme would enhance the quality of life by providing safer walkways, cycle paths and crossings. There was wide community support for the scheme.

CAB26 Forward Plan

(Copy of the Forward Plan for the month of November 2016 – circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of this item was to approve the Forward Plan.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan for the month of November 2016 be approved.

CAB27 Cabinet Action Plan

(Copy of the Action Plan – circulated with the Agenda.)

RESOLVED (1) that CAB16 HPC Planning Obligations Board – Allocations of CIM Funding be deleted as actioned.

RESOLVED (2) that CAB17 Hinkley Tourism Action Plan – Phase 2 Delivery 2016/17 be deleted as actioned.

RESOLVED (3) that CAB20 Revenue and Capital Outturn 2015/16 be deleted as actioned.

CAB28 HPC Planning Obligations Board – Allocations of CIM Funding

(Report No. WSC 94/16 – circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to present the recommendations of the Hinkley Point C Planning Obligations Board(HPCPOB) for the allocation of monies from the Community Impact Mitigation (CIM) Fund secured through the Section 106 legal agreement for the Site Preparation Works at Hinkley Point.

The Lead Member for Resources and Central Support presented the item and provided a brief outline of the two applications which had been considered by the HPC POB. Both bids were very well presented and had clearly evidenced the need.

The Lead Member for Resources and Central Support proposed the recommendation which was duly seconded by Councillor S Pugsley.

Support for the projects was expressed. Members felt the separation of main line traffic away from cyclists and walkers was essential, making it much safer, and would go towards improving health and wellbeing.

In response to a query raised concerning the Bridgwater Town Centre Support Scheme POB recommendation regarding reviewing the budget and the allocation of funds towards each element of the project and why this was not a stipulation for all applications, the CIM Fund Manager advised that for this particular case within the application some of the budget allocations were estimated and it was not clear how the money would be spent, therefore the spending would be monitored to ensure the objectives in the applications were being met.

The CIM Fund Manager and the Lead Member for Resources and Central Support reassured Members that there would always be monitoring undertaken for all projects in terms of finances and to ensure they were being carried out within the parameters of their business plans.

RESOLVED that it be recommended to Council to endorse the recommendations of the Hinkley Point C Planning Obligations Board for projects applying for over £25,000 as follows:

- To release £116,070 from the CIM Fund ring-fenced for Sedgemoor (and in particular Bridgwater) with the following conditions:
 - CIM Fund Manager and Sedgemoor District Council to review the budget and the allocation of funds towards each element of the project with the applicant after all tender processes have been completed to ensure the project remains affordable.
 - Applicant to provide regular monitoring reports that provide details of spending against each element of the project.
- To release £344,850 of CIM funding for the Southern Bridgwater and North Petherton Community Mitigation Scheme. £242,776 from the Sedgemoor (in particular Bridgwater) ring-fence and £102,074 from the 1st Annual Payment with the following conditions:
That funds are not released until full tender processes are completed and delivery plans have been agreed with SCC and a decision has been made on match funding bids.

CAB29 Customer Access and Shared Assets (CASA) Project

(Report No. WSC 95/16 - circulated with the Agenda.)

The purpose of the report was to propose the creation of a hub at West Somerset House (WSH) for which the overall aim is to maximise the use of the asset, making better use of the space on the ground and mezzanine floors, increasing income and recovering a percentage of the running costs, whilst continuing to occupy the rest of the building.

The Leader indicated that he wished to discuss the confidential appendices to the report and recommended that Cabinet consider excluding the press and public during consideration of the confidential appendices to the report, which was duly seconded.

RESOLVED that the press and public be excluded during consideration of the confidential appendices on the grounds that, if the press and public were present during that item, there would be likely to be a disclosure to them of exempt information of the class specified in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 as amended as follows:

The appendices contained information that could release confidential information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). It was therefore agreed that after consideration of all the circumstances of the case, the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighs the public interest in disclosing the information.

The Lead Member for Resources and Central Support presented the report and drew attention to the key points contained within. She advised that Corporate PAG had fully debated the matter and explained the CASA project was a Somerset County Council (SCC) countywide initiative aligned to their customer access strategy. The aim being to use WSH differently in order to maximise its use, whilst safeguarding services, improving customer access and securing extra income.

Members were provided with updated SCC and Avon and Somerset Police (ASP) area plans.

During discussion, the following specific issues were raised:

- Concerns were expressed about car park provision as difficulties were already being experienced – better use of the car park could be made to create additional spaces and the loss of income from fee paying spaces in the public car park should be kept to a minimum.
- Officers responded by informing Members of a car park usage survey currently being undertaken over a three week period to interpret whether there was a requirement for additional parking spaces. The results would be communicated following completion of the survey.
- In addition, officers advised that how the council staff used the building in the future would change as part of the transformation process due to the requirement for greater flexibility, use of pool cars, video conferencing etc., thereby car parking should not be a concern.
- Potential problems arising from the unmanned self-serve library were highlighted as this may have an impact on WSC staff having to help library customers. It was confirmed that to alleviate any difficulties library staff would be available and on-hand full-time within the first three weeks to support customers. The level of service integration would be reviewed at a later date which would generate additional income if agreed.
- Following questions regarding the leases, reassurance was provided that the rents and levels per square foot reflected current market conditions.
- It was noted that there were health and wellbeing implications associated with the project which should be included in the report.

- Securing services and bringing them into one building was seen as a positive for the community.
- Various questions were asked of the area plans including safety measures for children using the library service, the impact on meeting rooms and future arrangements, remodelling work and the relocation of the staff breakout area.
- Serious concerns were raised in relation to ASP's requirement for a weapons cabinet on the premises and a request was made that stringent regulations be adhered as to its location and security. Officers confirmed a clear procedure with the police would be established in terms of the storage period and the location would be discussed in detail during the next phase of the project.
- Concerns about the impact on WSC staff when ASP enquiries desk was closed.
- In response to whether the CASA project would threaten or impinge on the future plans and accommodation needs of a new council, officers advised that, if a decision was taken in the future to consolidate accommodation, leasing the available space to a number of tenants would add value to WSH.

Once Members confirmed that no more questions were to be raised on matters relating to the confidential appendices, the Leader proposed that the press and the public return to the Council Chamber.

RESOLVED that the press and public be readmitted to the meeting.

The Lead Member for Resources and Central Support proposed the recommendations which were duly seconded by Councillor K Mills.

No further discussion ensued.

RESOLVED (1) that the principle of leasing surplus space within West Somerset House to the organisations specified and within the broad terms outlined in the report be approved.

RESOLVED (2) that authority be delegated to the Resources and Central Support Portfolio Holder and Director of Housing and Communities to conclude detailed design, commercial terms and undertake works to complete the project.

RESOLVED (3) that the use of £31,500 from in-year underspends to fund the revenue costs and to approve the use of £83,000 of available capital resources to fund the capital element be approved. This would then be included in the capital programme.

The meeting closed at 5.00 pm.