

Crawley Borough Council

Cabinet

Supplementary Agenda

Wednesday, 24 July 2024



Chief Executive

	Pages
6 Matters referred to the Cabinet and Report from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission	3 - 4
<p>Attached is a copy of the OSC Comments to Cabinet from its meeting on: 23 July 2024.</p>	
10 Forward Programme of Key Procurements July – December 2024	5 - 6
<p>The Leader's Portfolio</p> <p>Attached are details for a proposed additional contract title for inclusion within Appendix A to the "Forward Programme of Key Procurements (July – December 2024)" and approval in Recommendation 2.1a of report FIN/661.</p>	

NOTE: The Leader has agreed that, although this report and information was not available for at least five clear days before the meeting, there are special circumstances justifying its urgent consideration.



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Agenda Item 6

Cabinet
Wednesday 24 July 2024

Comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Commission at its meeting on Tuesday 23 July 2024 OSC/322

1. Cabinet Agenda Item – Financial Outturn 2023-2024 (Quarter 4)

Comments and Recommendations

The Commission considered report [FIN/658](#) of the Head of Corporate Finance. During the discussion with the Leader of the Council, the Head of Corporate Finance and Chief Accountant, the following comments were made:

- Clarification was sought and obtained on the rising cost of repairs. High inflation, construction costs and an unprecedented demand were contributory factors. It was recognised that there was now a higher awareness of damp and mould throughout the industry. Prioritisation of repairs had taken place within the service, but it was important to undertake necessary maintenance to avoid properties falling into despair. Stock conditioning surveys were underway with the aim to move from responsive repairs to planned maintenance which should result in efficiencies.
- Confirmation provided on the funding available from the Better Care Fund.
- Clarification was sought and obtained with regards to the addition of the Senior Project Manager within the Built Environment Team, together with the demand for the delivery of capital projects.
- Acknowledgement that the homelessness and temporary accommodation pressures continued to rise and there were many contributing factors including the unaffordability of home ownership, shrinking private rented sector along with higher interest rates, Housing Benefit Subsidy (Local Housing Allowance had been frozen since 2011), the reduction of council and other social housing to meet demand. Temporary accommodation was expensive, and it was difficult to meet current levels of demand with existing stock required. There was also a shortage of temporary and nightly paid accommodation driving up prices. It was noted households in nightly paid rose from 206 in April 2023, to a peak of 280 in December 2023.

RESOLVED

That the Commission noted the report and requested that the views expressed during the debate, were fed back to the Cabinet through the Commission's Comment sheet.

2. Cabinet Agenda Item – Treasury Management Outturn 2023 – 2024

Comments and Recommendations

The Commission considered report [FIN/659](#) of the Head of Corporate Finance. During the discussion with the Leader of the Council, Head of Corporate Finance and Chief Accountant, the following points were expressed:

- Noted that the authorised limit for external borrowing set by the Council was exceeded for a short period during Q4 of 2023/24 and was now back within the set limit. The Commission was informed that the reason for exceeding the limit was a dip in short term cash flow which was met through short term loans from other local authorities. Since the operational boundary was a management tool for in-year monitoring it was not deemed significant if the boundary was breached on occasions due to variations in cash flow, and this was not counted as a compliance failure.
- Recognition that the Operational Boundary and Authorised Limit for 2024/25 had since been reviewed with the assistance of the Council's treasury advisors and subsequently increased.
- Confirmation sought and obtained on the detailed funding available within the Strategy, particularly the maturity and interest rates, which would be further updated in Q1.
- Recognition that non treasury investments/commercial properties (excluding town hall) had achieved a rate of return of 8.8%.

Agenda Item 6

RESOLVED

That the Commission noted the report and requested that the views expressed during the debate were fed back to the Cabinet through the Commission's Comment sheet.

3. Cabinet Agenda Item – Temporary Accommodation Acquisitions Programme

Exempt Paragraph 3 –

Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

Comments and Recommendations

The Commission considered report SHAP/090 of the Head of Strategic Housing. During the discussion with the Cabinet Member for Housing and the Housing Enabling and Development Manager, the following points were expressed:

- Recognition that it would allow officers to expand the temporary accommodation stock through acquisition opportunities and viable options, which had significant potential to contribute towards addressing Crawley's housing needs and assist in reducing the financial burden of using expensive nightly-paid accommodation, including out of borough placements.
- Clarification was sought and obtained on the financial elements and the various detailed options documented within the report.
- General overall support for the proposal, as it was noted that the range of opportunities being explored would assist in future development of the areas and amenity, whilst increasing the council's portfolio of temporary accommodation.

RESOLVED

That the Commission noted the report and requested that the views expressed during the debate were fed back to the Cabinet through the Commission's Comment sheet.

Councillor Ayling
Chair, Overview and Scrutiny Commission
23 July 2024

Agenda Item 10

Appendix A – Procurement Forward Programme

New proposed additional contract details in red.

Contract Title	Estimated Contract Value	Brief Description
CBC HDC MSDC MVDC Cash Collection	c£600,000 All Councils (5 years) £200,000 CBC (5 years)	Professional cash collection service from four councils' properties (including car parks). Lead Officer: Carey Manger / Jacob Hughes.
Waste Collection	c£8million (assumes three year contract extension)	Waste collection and services. Contract extended to 31st March 2026. Current contract with Biffa, expires Jan 2026 Lead Officers: Nigel Sheehan / Paul Baker Further separate report for approval to go to Cabinet September 2024
Hawth Theatre	c£25million. Assumes a 10 year contract. Based on estimated turnover.	Current contract with Parkwood Leisure. Lead Officers: Nigel Sheehan / Paul Baker Further separate report for approval to go to Cabinet October 2024
Fire Safety Contract	c£100k pa (5 – 10 year contract)	Contract for the provision of fire safety services, identified in recent Crawley Homes audit. Likely to use a framework agreement. Lead Officer: Geoff Tarran.
Bus Shelters	Concession Contract valued at c£3.1million over 10 years	Contract for bus shelter supply and maintenance in return for advertising rights. Current contract has been renewed and is overdue for open procurement. Procurement process to take place in Autumn 2024, with new contract starting in late 2025 after mobilisation. Lead officers: Clem Smith / Phil Morris
CBC HDC Arboricultural Services		Contract for tree services including inspection. Lead Officers: Karen Rham / Justin Roberts.
Managing Operator for the Crawley Innovation Centre	Concession Contract valued at c£3.5 million over 5 years	The Managing Operator will manage the Innovation Centre building and the site facilities, deliver the required occupancy of the Centre with hi-tech small businesses and facilitate access to business support services by the business tenants. Lead Officer: Clem Smith

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