

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Cabinet

Wednesday, 3 February 2021 at 7.00 pm

Councillors Present:

P K Lamb (Chair)	Leader of the Council
I T Irvine	Cabinet Member for Housing
G S Jhans	Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Sustainability
C J Mullins	Cabinet Member for Wellbeing
P C Smith	Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development and Deputy Leader

Also in Attendance:

Councillors T G Belben, B J Burgess, R D Burrett, D Crow, K L Jaggard and K McCarthy

Officers Present:

Natalie Brahma-Pearl	Chief Executive
Ian Duke	Deputy Chief Executive
Karen Hayes	Head of Corporate Finance
Chris Pedlow	Democratic Services Manager
Heather Girling	Democratic Services Officer
Nigel Sheehan	Head of Projects and Commercial Services
Louise Skipton-Carter	Sustainability Manager
Clem Smith	Head of Economy and Planning
Kate Wilson	Head of Community Services

Apologies for Absence:

Councillor B A Smith

1. Disclosures of Interest

No disclosures of interests were made.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 25 November 2020 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Leader.

3. Public Question Time

There were no questions from the public.

4. Further Notice of Intention to Conduct Business in Private and Notifications of any Representations

It was reported that no representations had been received in respect of agenda item 16: The Hawth Theatre – Contract Extension.

5. Matters referred to the Cabinet and Report from the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Commission

It was confirmed that no matters had been referred to the Cabinet for further consideration.

6. Petition – “Save Crawley’s Adventure Playgrounds”.

The Cabinet considered report [HSC/26](#) of the Head of Community Services. The report responded to the petition submitted from residents titled ‘Save Crawley’s Adventure Playgrounds’, following the recent budget consultation whereby over 1,200 residents gave their views on potential service changes an option was proposed to review the adventure play moving to a more flexible model of delivery. The petition documented the concerns and issues with loss of the supervised sites within the town as follows:

“Crawley Council have just announced that they will be closing all 4 of our adventure playgrounds, 2 will close completely and 2 will become unsupervised play areas.

This will leave the children of Crawley with nowhere safe to play. The adventure playgrounds are a part of Crawley’s history, they have been around for 60 years! I grew up spending most of my childhood playing in them and so have my children. They are still well used by so many local families. We love having somewhere to go that provides a safe place to be outside, socialising and exercising with toilets, staff and refreshments available to all. Us parents can meet up and we can bring the little ones along and they play here all day, they make new friends, gain confidence, get fresh air and exercise without it costing a fortune. Where will we go without these? Where can you go knowing that the kids can roam free without the worry of safety and knowing there is always a safe adult to hand if needed. What type of people could these areas attract if unsupervised?

They also offer reasonably priced childcare services throughout school holidays for those of us that don’t have the ability to pay private fees whilst we are at work. For some parents this is a life line and we will be lost without it.

Where will our children go to socialise now? Out on the streets, causing mischief and creating issues due to boredom or stop going out and rely on technology?! We don’t have youth clubs anymore, so these are their only options? What good will either of these do for the mental health of the next generation? Please sign our petition to ask the council to look at the options again and review this decision!”

In advance of considering the report the Cabinet hear from the principal petitioner via a copy of their written statement providing further support to their petition. The statement was read out by an officer, in line with the Council's Virtual Committee Procedure. (A copy of the written statement was attached as an appendix A to the minutes).

The Cabinet Member for Wellbeing in presenting the report expressed his empathy with residents who had signed the petition wanting to protect the adventure playgrounds, however the council was facing an ongoing reduction in its income and the changes to adventure play would save the Council approximately £210k immediately. Two of the facilities, Cherry Lane and Waterlea, would remain, but running in a different way, with Waterlea receiving new investment. To keep the others Creasy's Drive and the Mill Pond and updating them to a suitable and safe level it would cost a between £500k to £750k. It was noted that the average cost to taxpayers per child per visit to the adventure playgrounds was over £30 and that the number of users were consistently dropping, reducing by over 60% in the last 20 years.

It was emphasised that the adventure playground and the Council's play services were designed for five to 13 years olds and not for teenagers, which was in response to a point made as part of the petition, questioning the closure of facilities for teenagers within the Borough. However, the Council's focus for the Play Service would now be on outreach work in local communities and there was a commitment to continue to update local playgrounds across the town.

Councillor T Belben presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report as detailed in report [OSC/293](#), to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 1 February 2021, which included:

- Residents should feel compelled to organise a petition if they were concerned regarding an issue affecting the town. It allowed officers and councillors to re-assess issues.
- It was remarked that the results of the consultation should not be ignored and that there was a 68% reduction in attendance at the playgrounds.
- It was acknowledged that other providers (not for profit) may be interested in the adventure playgrounds. However, the sites would require substantial capital investment that exceeded current funds and the operational costs were significant.
- Children and young people had different expectations regarding play and the budget needed to be spent wisely, with the play team being used in the most effective and efficient way possible to ensure children could continue to be engaged.
- It was acknowledged that the Play Service was primarily aimed at five to 13 year olds. It was not intended as an alternative to youth provision. Youth Service provision was within the remit of West Sussex County Council.

Councillor Lamb commenting on the petition reemphasised that the tough decision was taken, following the financial pressure created by the Covid pandemic and the Council had a legal duty to pass a balanced budget. If the decision was reversed then the Council would struggle in meeting that requirement as there was no suggestion on how the Council could make up the difference. However, as the Council did receive an unexpected grant since the savings were first proposed, current provision would now be maintained for the most part for much of the coming council year. Councillor Irvine also spoke as part of the discussion on the report.

Councillor Lamb moved that the petition be noted but there be no change to the current decision. A recorded vote was taken on the recommendations in accordance

with the Council's Virtual Committee Procedure Rules. The names of the Councillors voting for and against the recommendations, along with any abstentions, are recorded as set out below:

For the recommendations:
Councillors Irvine, Jhans, Lamb, Mullins and P Smith. (5)

Against the recommendations:
None.

Abstentions:
None.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet notes the petition, and agrees to continue with their original decision surrounding the adventure playgrounds.

Reasons for the Recommendations

To ensure the procedure for petitions as detailed in the Council's Constitution is adhered to.

Councillor Mullins after the item had finished confirmed that he would write to the Principal Petitioner thanking them for the petition and providing them with a further explanation as to the Cabinet's decision including addressing all the areas they raised and questioned.

7. Climate Change Scrutiny Panel Final Report

Councillor Jaggard as Chair of the Climate Change Scrutiny Panel presented report [OSC/292](#) the Panel's final report to the Cabinet. The Cabinet were reminded that the Climate Change Scrutiny Panel was established following a Notice of Motion at Full Council in July 2019, which had been carried unanimously. The remit of the review as identified by Notice of Motion was to "look into and make recommendations focusing upon the workings and activities of Crawley Borough Council relating to carbon emissions." The Cabinet were informed that the Scrutiny Panel's large number recommendations reflected the motion and outlined proposals to help the Council to achieve the ambition to reduce carbon emissions generated by Crawley Borough Council activities by at least 45% by 2030 and to zero by 2050.

Councillor T Belben presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report as detailed in report [OSC/293](#), to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 1 February 2021, which included:

- It was considered that the Panel's recommendations were practical and the idea of a climate change impact assessment document on any new project/change in policy or service was thought to be very important.
- Recognition that in order to reach its carbon emissions target the Council may have to lead by example and change the way it works and adapt.
- It was noted that the heating of the pool at K2 Crawley was the most major source of emissions. The Panel had fully recognised there were industry standards and there were mixed views from individuals on the pool temperature. However, it strongly wished for the recommendation to be considered.

- Support for the Climate Emergency Action Plan should be regularly reported back to OSC and Cabinet. The Climate Emergency Officer Advisory Group would consider options for reporting back as part of their actions. The officers' group was best placed to have the expert knowledge and skill to identify actions, activities and timescales within the council's services.
- There was general support for the recommendations from the majority of members. However, there was concern raised from some regarding recommendation 'q' and paperless meetings, particularly the need to read reports thoroughly and the impact upon people's eyes of such length of time on devices. In contrast, there was recognition of the large environmental and financial benefits together with the availability of additional equipment along with further training. It was acknowledged the Cabinet Member for Resources took the decision that any newly elected councillor would be paperless from May 2018, whilst remaining compliant under the Equality Act.
- During the debate Councillor Lanzer (seconded by Councillor T Belben) moved a proposed amendment adding a further recommendation:

2.3 c) That Full Council be asked to – *Request the Governance Committee look at the future format of the Council's formal and informal meetings to consider which should be face to face, virtual or hybrid.*

Councillor Jhans, as Cabinet Member for Environmental Services and Sustainability was invited to speak. Whilst thanking the Panel and officers for a thorough piece of work, Councillor Jhans would welcome the action plan and regular reporting back. It would be beneficial for the Cabinet to refer this back to the officer advisory group to translate into deliverable actions and in doing so proposed the following amendments.

Ref recommendation in 2.2: "Cabinet endorses the principle of the recommendations set out in section 6, subject to a full evaluation as part of the development of the Council's Climate Change Emergency Action Plan and for that Action Plan to be brought back to Cabinet for consideration as soon as possible".

Ref recommendations in 2.3: "Cabinet agrees that the recommendations in 2.3 in addition to recommendation 2.3c proposed by the Overview and Scrutiny Commission, be put to Full Council for consideration".

Councillor Crow also spoke on the item and in doing so thanked the Panel for its hard work through the Scrutiny process and welcomed Councillor Jhans proposed amendment. He also commented believing that the Council should lead by example particularly on property, transport and energy, however with regards to a couple of the recommendations (f) the temperature at K2 Crawley needed to be comfortable and (q) there was a limit for screen time but he added this was only a minor point and the council was right to lead the way.

Councillors P Smith, Irvine, and Mullins spoke as part of the discussion on the report and were fully behind the principles of the recommendations. However, some concerns were expressed over recommendation (f) relating to the temperature at K2 Crawley swimming pool and (q) paperless committee meetings.

A recorded vote was taken on the proposed amendment to the recommendations as moved by Councillor Jhans and seconded by Councillor Lamb. In accordance with the Council's Virtual Committee Procedure Rules. The names of the Councillors voting for and against the recommendations, along with any abstentions, are recorded as set out below:

For the recommendations:
Councillors Irvine, Jhans, Lamb, Mullins and P Smith. (5)

Against the recommendations:
None.

Abstentions:
None.

RESOLVED

The proposed amendment was carried.

A recorded vote was taken on the recommendations as amended in accordance with the Council's Virtual Committee Procedure Rules. The names of the Councillors voting for and against the recommendations, along with any abstentions, are recorded as set out below:

For the recommendations:
Councillors Irvine, Jhans, Lamb, Mullins and P Smith. (5)

Against the recommendations:
None.

Abstentions:
None.

RESOLVED

Cabinet endorses the principle of the recommendations set out in Section 6 of report [OSC/292](#), subject to a full evaluation as part of the development of the Council's Climate Change Emergency Action Plan and for that Action Plan to be brought back to Cabinet for consideration as soon as possible.

That Full Council be requested to:

- a) endorse the Scrutiny Panel's findings and recommendations contained within report [OSC/292](#)
- b) request that any necessary revisions to the Council's Constitution relating to paperless committee meetings be made.
- c) Request that the Governance Committee look at the future format of the Council's formal and informal meetings to consider which should be face to face, virtual or hybrid.

Reasons for the Recommendations

The recommendations reflect the motion agreed by Full Council and outline proposals to help the Council to achieve the ambition to reduce carbon emissions generated by Crawley Borough Council activities by at least 45% by 2030 and to zero by 2050s.

8. Proposed Article 4 Directions - Planning Change of Use from C3 (dwellinghouses) to C4 (houses in multiple occupation)

The Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development presented report [PES/366](#) of the Head of Economy and Planning which sought approval for the making of non-immediate Article 4 Directions, removing the permitted development right for dwelling houses (use class C3) to convert to houses of multiple occupation (HMO) (use class C4) in various locations in Crawley, to protect the amenity and wellbeing of the areas concerned.

Councillor T Belben presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report as detailed in report [OSC/293](#), to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 1 February 2021, which included:

- It was acknowledged that HMOs above the five-person threshold require a licence and this assisted in monitoring, particularly the use of the map of licensed HMOs.
- The Directions would target specifically the 10 residential zones in Crawley where there was a clear majority of residential dwellings that were 3-storey terraced properties and multiple HMOs. Acknowledgement that the rationale was the coincidence of these types of properties, increased concentration and potential for HMO clustering. It was important to ensure that evidence and figures used to support the proposal was robust, for example in relation to numbers of bedrooms.
- With regards to Burwash Road in Furnace Green there were no licenced HMOs on the current list at present but it would be monitored. Concerns raised regarding conversions to HMOs elsewhere and displacement to other areas within the neighbourhoods and other areas within the town.
- It was anticipated that by introducing the Directions in some areas which currently have a lower number of HMOs, it may avoid the need to introduce further Directions in such areas at a later date.
- Support for a welcomed and balanced approach.

Councillor Crow was invited to speak to the item and he welcomed the report and as whilst there were benefits to HMOs within the housing sector, there needed to be a balance within the community.

Councillor Irvine spoke as part of the discussion on the report commenting that he was pleased that it was acknowledged that there was a need for HMOs and they served an important housing function. He also pleased with the scientific approach used to identify the areas that might require the use of an Article 4 Direction.

A recorded vote was taken on the recommendations, in accordance with the Council's Virtual Committee Procedure Rules. The names of the Councillors voting for and against the recommendations, along with any abstentions, are recorded as set out below:

For the recommendations:
Councillors Irvine, Jhans, Lamb, Mullins and P Smith. (5)

Against the recommendations:
None.

Abstentions:
None.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet:

- a) approves the making of 10 non-immediate Article 4 Directions under the Town and Country (General Permitted Development Order) 2015. These will remove the permitted development right for dwelling houses (Use Class C3) to change their use into houses of multiple occupation (Use Class C4), in the 10 zones referred to in paragraph 3.3 and outlined on the plans within Appendix A of report PES/366.
- b) delegates authority to the Head of Economy and Planning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development to formally confirm the non-immediate Article 4 Directions following the 12 month notification period, if having fully considered all representations made during the consultation period, they are of the opinion that the Article 4 Direction should be made.

(Generic Delegation 3 will be used to enact this recommendation).

Reasons for the Recommendations

The proposed Article 4 Directions are intended to enable the council to use its planning powers to manage and limit concentrations of houses of multiple occupation (HMOs) in areas which are considered susceptible to them, so as to mitigate and avoid the cumulative impacts on local amenity associated with concentrations of this type of accommodation. The rationale for such Directions is explained below in sections 4 and 5 of report PES/366.

HMOs remain an important part of the range of accommodation available in the borough and cater to the needs of specific groups. The intention is therefore not to reduce or restrict their delivery in the borough as a whole, but merely to resist the development of significant clusters of them in particular locations, and to promote strong, balanced communities.

The ten residential zones where these Article 4 directions would apply are in the following locations (the extent of each zone is indicated on the maps within Appendix A of report PES/366):

Aintree Road & Epsom Road, Furnace Green
Arden Road, Furnace Green
Ardingly Close, Ifield
Beverley Mews, Three Bridges,
Caburn Heights, Southgate
Farmleigh Close, Pound Hill
Rillside and Winterford, Furnace Green
Ringwood Close, Furnace Green
Victoria Mews, West Green
Weald Drive, Furnace Green

The rationale for selecting the above 10 residential zones is explained in Section 6 of report [PES/366](#).

9. 2021/2022 Budget and Council Tax

The Leader presented report [FIN/514](#) of the Head of Corporate Finance, which set out the Budget and level of Council Tax for the year 2021/22. It was noted that the report detailed each of the Revenue, Capital and Housing Revenue Accounts that combine together to formulate 'The Budget'. In proposing the level of Council Tax for the Financial Year 2021/22, each of those accounts identified had been considered. The proposed Council Tax for 2021/22 was to be increased by 2.37%.

The Council has a statutory responsibility to set a Council Tax and Budget in advance of the commencement of the new financial year. The Council Tax has to be set by 11 March, each year.

The Cabinet was informed that the proposed Budget had been produced based on the principles set in the Budget Strategy which was approved by Full Council on 16 December 2020. That included achieving balanced Budget over a four year period including putting back to reserves when the Budget is in surplus.

The Leader emphasised that the Council budget setting process had been completely impacted by the Covid pandemic and how that has hit the Council's main sources of funding. The Council was having to make in the region of £2.4mil of saving this year with £1.6mil from back office savings and the remaining £800k from service delivery.

Councillor T Belben presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report as detailed in report [OSC/293](#), to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 1 February 2021, which included:

- Confirmation that the savings for the pitch and putt would be made through an increase in fees and charges. It was noted that the service had temporarily had to close due to the pandemic.
- Clarification sought on the redundancy provision and pension entitlement information held within the Pay Policy statement, following introduction of the reform of local government exit payments.
- Confirmation that the £506,450 was agreed in December 2020 as part of the in-year savings exercise, whilst the £506,000 has been identified as further current year savings as part of the consultation exercise.
- Acknowledgement that there had been genuine cross party working throughout the budget process and that members had been involved throughout the budget process.

Councillor Crow spoke on item, confirming that he would be seconding this Budget and Council Tax report at Full Council in his position as Opposition Leader. He emphasised the cross party working throughout the budget process and it was important that the Council set a sustainable budget.

A recorded vote was taken on the recommendations in accordance with the Council's Virtual Committee Procedure Rules. The names of the Councillors voting for and against the recommendations, along with any abstentions, are recorded as set out below:

For the recommendations:

Councillors Irvine, Jhans, Lamb, Mullins and P Smith. (5)

Against the recommendations:

None.

Abstentions:
None.

RESOLVED

That Full Council be recommended to approve the following items regarding the 2021/22 Budget:

- a) to approve the proposed 2021/22 General Fund Budget including savings and growth as set out in paragraph 6.4 of the report [FIN/514](#),
- b) to approve the proposed 2021/22 Housing Revenue Account Budget as set out in section 10 and Appendix 3 of the report [FIN/514](#),
- c) to agree to ringfence £435,000 of useable capital receipts for investment in the Town Centre as a result of using Government funding on the Heat Network to avoid having to repay the grant,
- d) to agree to increase the capital budget for 2021/22 for temporary accommodation acquisition by £826,300 to be funded from the earmarked homelessness acquisition reserve,
- e) to approve the 2020/21 and future years Capital Programme and funding as set out in paragraph 11.6 of the report [FIN/514](#),
- f) to agree that the Council's share of Council Tax for 2021/22 be increased by 2.37% (£4.95) from £208.89 to £213.84 for a band D property as set out in paragraph 13.3 of the report [FIN/514](#),
- g) to approve the Pay Policy Statement for 2021/2022 as outlined in paragraph 16.3 and Appendix 6 of the report [FIN/514](#),
- h) to approve the CBC Pricing Strategy as outlined in Appendix 7 of the report [FIN/514](#).

Reasons for the Recommendations

To provide adequate funding for the proposed level of services and to fulfil the statutory requirement to set a Budget and Council Tax and report on the robustness of estimates.

10. Treasury Management Strategy 2021-2022

The Leader presented report [FIN/517](#) of the Head of Corporate Finance on the Treasury Management Strategy for 2020/2021 which the Council was required to approve before the start of the financial year in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management and the Council's financial regulations. The strategy itself sets out how the Council would be investing its money across the course of the year. It was noted that the format of the report had changed compared to previous years and that was due to a change in the advisor used by the Council in devising the strategy.

Councillor T Belben presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report as detailed in report [OSC/293](#), to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 1 February 2021, which included:

- Acknowledgement that where the Council had investments leased by other parties, it was the intention that rents were paid. Should that not be the case given economic circumstances the Council would liaise with liquidators or investigate relinquishing the property. Investments were entered into with the most suitable terms and best intentions.
- Clarity sought and obtained on the likelihood of a negative interest rate and the value of investments as a result of a potential move to a negative rate. It was confirmed that only treasury bills were paying negative interest and the Council did not hold any of these at present. Existing investments were mostly fixed term investment and these will pay the interest rate agreed at the time they were taken out. It was possible there will be negative rates with regards to future investments.
- Confirmation that the maximum to be lent to any one organisation could be increased to correspond to the counterparty limits.

Councillor Irvine spoke as part of the discussion on the report and in response to a question he asked it was confirmed that the Council was still being in receipt of income from its investment properties, despite of the current economic climate.

A recorded vote was taken on the recommendations, in accordance with the Council's Virtual Committee Procedure Rules. The names of the Councillors voting for and against the recommendations, along with any abstentions, are recorded as set out below:

For the recommendations:
Councillors Irvine, Jhans, Lamb, Mullins, and P Smith (5)

Against the recommendations:
None.

Abstentions:
None.

RESOLVED

That Full Council be recommended to approve the following items:

- a) the Treasury Prudential Indicators and the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Statement contained within Section 5 of report [FIN/517](#);
- b) the Treasury Management Strategy contained within Section 6 of report [FIN/517](#);
- c) the Investment Strategy contained within Section 7 of report [FIN/517](#);

Reasons for the Recommendations

The Council's financial regulations, in accordance with the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management, requires a Treasury Management Strategy to be approved for the forthcoming financial year. This report complies with these requirements.

11. 2020/2021 Budget Monitoring - Quarter 3

The Leader presented report [FIN/516](#) of the Head of Corporate on the Quarter 3 budget monitoring, which set out a summary of the Council's actual revenue and capital spending for the quarters to December 2020 together with the main variations from the approved spending levels and impact on future budgets. The Leader explained that the impact of the Covid19 has had a dramatically impacted upon the Council budget and income streams, so that at the end of the Quarter 3, even with additional Government funding and significant in year savings, there was a deficit of £100k to the General Fund.

Councillor T Belben presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report as detailed in report [OSC/293](#), to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 1 February 2021, which included:

- Confirmation provided in relation to Rushetts Road play area which was the only play area on the priority list that met the S106 criteria and the money needed to be spent by the end of June. By completing this area it allowed the team dealing with the play equipment time to work on other priorities within the next 18 months, including areas such as Wakehams Green.
- Potential option for a review of how reports were presented once the pandemic was over, although it was recognised that there were reasons why finances had to be documented in particular formats.

A recorded vote was taken on the recommendations, in accordance with the Council's Virtual Committee Procedure Rules. The names of the Councillors voting for and against the recommendations, along with any abstentions, are recorded as set out below:

For the recommendations:

Councillors Irvine, Jhans, Lamb, Mullins and P Smith. (5)

Against the recommendations:

None.

Abstentions:

None.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet approves the projected outturn for the year 2020/2021 as summarised in this report.

Reasons for the Recommendations

To report to Members on the projected outturn for the year compared to the approved budget.

12. Community Grants Future Options

The Leader presented report [HCS/24](#) of the Head of Community Services. The report sought to consider the options for the future community grants process. The Cabinet was informed that it was proposed to reduce the grants budget, current set at of

£632,000, by one third for the 2021/22, because of the impact on that Covid pandemic has had on the Council's revenue budget. It was explained that the new funding proposal would be based on a commissioning approach, where the Council commissions organisations to provide clear indefinable outcomes for our community. There would also be a £50k pot for smaller grants using a match funding formula.

The Leader commented whilst it was an unfortunate situation that the Council was having to reduce the funding, the Council was still twice as generous as any other similar type of Council in the country. The Council also provides significant property and rental support to a number of charities and third sector organisations, further to the grant funding.

Councillor T Belben presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report as detailed in report [OSC/293](#), to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 1 February 2021, which included:

- Recognition of the many groups and organisations within the town. It was questioned if all were aware of other funding opportunities. The liaison work with organisations and signposting arrangements would be maintained.
- It was felt it would be beneficial for the new commissioning model to come before the Commission.
- Acknowledgement that in terms of the review process the Grants Appeal Panel was still in existence and it was felt this was the correct approach.
- Recognition that re-designing the service towards a proposed commissioning approach still enabled the service to deliver in an effective and efficient manner whilst maintaining the connections to the community.

A recorded vote was taken on the recommendations, in accordance with the Council's Virtual Committee Procedure Rules. The names of the Councillors voting for and against the recommendations, along with any abstentions, are recorded as set out below:

For the recommendations:

Councillors Irvine, Jhans, Lamb, Mullins and P Smith. (5)

Against the recommendations:

None.

Abstentions:

None.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet agrees:

- a) the funding intentions and associated outcomes for the future programme as outlined in section 5 of report [HCS/24](#).
- b) the process for allocating funding as outlined in section 5 of report [HCS/24](#).
- c) the process for approving grant allocations and appeals process in 2021/22 and 2022/23 as outlined in section 5 of report [HCS/24](#).

Reasons for the Recommendations

The proposed transfer will reduce the budget gap in the General Fund as laid out in the Budget Strategy. The recommendations support the Council to achieve a balanced budget position for 2021/22 onwards whilst retaining sufficient revenue funds to deliver a high quality outcome focused commissioning and small grants programme that can better respond to our community's needs.

They also take into account the needs of the organisations that we currently fund and allow us to support them through a transition period, as appropriate to their individual circumstance.

13. Forward Programme of Key Procurements (January-June 2021)

The Leader presented report [FIN/513](#) of the Head of Corporate Finance. The report detailed the current forward programme of key procurements and sought delegated authority for the contract award approvals following the appropriate procurement process to the Leader. It was detailed that the purpose of the proposal was to ensure the Council's decision making relating to procurement decisions were efficient and also in line with the Constitution.

A recorded vote was taken on the recommendations, in accordance with the Council's Virtual Committee Procedure Rules. The names of the Councillors voting for and against the recommendations, along with any abstentions, are recorded as set out below:

For the recommendations:
Councillors Irvine, Jhans, Lamb, Mullins and P Smith. (5)

Against the recommendations:
None.

Abstentions:
None.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet:

- a) approves the procurement forward programme January – June 2021.
- b) delegates authority to the Leader of the Council in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member, Opposition Leader, Head of Service, and Head of Legal, Governance and HR to approve the award of the contract following an appropriate procurement process
- c) delegates the negotiation, approval and completion of all relevant legal documentation, following the awarding of the contracts to the relevant Head of Service, Head of Legal, Governance and HR, Head of Corporate Finance, in consultation with the appropriate Cabinet Member.

(Generic Delegations 2 & 3 will be used to enact this recommendation)

Reasons for the Recommendations

By approving the procurement forward programme there is greater transparency of future procurement processes allowing more scope for internal stakeholders to input into how future contracts are delivered.

The approval of the forward programme provides a key decision that will enable the individual procurement processes to be awarded under delegated authority once the tender process has concluded giving the Council the ability to reduce the time required to complete a procurement process.

14. Exempt Information – Exclusion of the Public (Subject to Agenda Item 5)

RESOLVED

That in accordance with Section 100A(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following item of business on the grounds that it involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act by virtue of the paragraph specified against the item.

15. The Hawth Theatre - Contract Extension

Exempt Part B - By Virtue of Paragraph 3
Information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)

The Cabinet received report HPS/24 of the Head of Major Projects and Commercial Services. The report sought an extension to the contract for a further four years along with a repayable grant to Parkwood Leisure. The Cabinet were provided with an updated on the current position by the Head of Major Projects and Commercial Services.

A recorded vote was taken on the recommendations, in accordance with the Council's Virtual Committee Procedure Rules. The names of the Councillors voting for and against the recommendations, along with any abstentions, are recorded as set out below:

For the recommendations:
Councillors Irvine, Jhans, Lamb, and P Smith. (4)

Against the recommendations:
None.

Abstentions:
None.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet approves

- a) a four year extension of the Hawth Theatre Contract with Parkwood Leisure covering the period February 1st 2022 to January 31st 2026.
- b) entering into a deed of variation setting out the revisions to the terms of the Hawth Theatre contract as listed in paragraph 5.2 of this report.

That Full Council is recommended to approve:

- a) The allocation of a repayable Capital Grant of £400,000 to Parkwood Leisure to provide support towards costs incurred during the Covid-19 pandemic as a result of distancing measures imposed upon theatres, and
- b) That the repayment of the Capital Grant occurs over the four year contract extension period.

Reasons for the Recommendations

The recommendation will enable the Hawth to continue trading over the remaining period of the contract and will provide stability of the local offer in the coming years where there is expected to be continued turbulence in the wider market.

The recommendation to extend the contract for four years will see a stepped reduction in the management fee and the introduction of a profit share mechanism which will support the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Cabinet concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 8.28 pm

P K LAMB
Chair

Appendix A - Principal Petitioner's Written Statement

Statement regarding the closure of Crawley Adventure playgrounds. *(Updated since the OSC meeting)*

The adventure playgrounds are a part of Crawley's history, they have been around for 60 years!

I grew up spending most of my childhood playing in them as did my parents and so have my children. They are still well used by so many local families.

We love having somewhere to go that provides a safe place to be outside, socialising and exercising - with toilets, staff and refreshments available to all.

Parents can meet up and we can bring the little ones along and they play here all day, they make new friends, gain confidence, get fresh air and exercise without it costing a fortune.

Play is proven to be a vital part of a child's development; Play improves the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being of children and young people. Through play, children learn about the world and themselves. They also learn skills they need for study, work and relationships such as: confidence.

Throughout the last 12 months the younger people within our community have suffered severely, they have been forced into lock-downs and quarantine, taken away from their peers, family members, schools and general social circles.

Many children have shown to be struggling with their mental well-being and here you are saying that when they are finally able to get out and mix again- there will be no where to go!

Youths of today are the future of this town. It is how we treat them and look after them now that will have a huge impact on the future employment and economy of Crawley.

Just because they can't speak up does not give anyone the right to ignore their human rights to play and good mental health.

The adventure playgrounds also offer reasonably priced childcare services throughout school holidays for those of us that don't have the ability to pay private fees whilst we are at work. For some parents this is a life line and we will be lost without it.

Without these supervised play areas, Where can you go knowing that the kids can roam free without the worry of safety and knowing there is always a safe adult to hand if needed.

Where will our children go to socialise now?

What type of people could these areas attract if unsupervised?

It will be the older generation complaining when they are out on the streets, causing mischief and creating issues due to boredom or the council complaining when having to deal with the cost of the therapy requirements due to them stopping going out, socialising and relying solely on technology?!

We don't have the old youth clubs anymore, so these are usually their only safe options! What good will your decisions do for the mental health of the next generation?

If its not viable to keep all 4 open would they not consider keeping 2 open and to give families the opportunity to utilise them, they stated that waterlea still has a pot there for the new equipment so has that already been accounted for?

Public consultation was only to 1200 Crawley residents and only had 1 question referring to play areas so that is not a fair response!

Please we urge you to look at the options again and review this decision!