

Crawley Borough Council

Minutes of Cabinet

Wednesday, 27 September 2023 at 7.00 pm

Councillors Present:

M G Jones (Chair)	Leader of the Council
I T Irvine	Cabinet Member for Housing
C J Mullins	Cabinet Member for Leisure and Wellbeing
S Mullins	Cabinet Member for Community Engagement and Culture
A Nawaz	Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Planning and Economic Development
B Noyce	Cabinet Member for Environment, Sustainability and Climate Change
T Rana	Cabinet Member for Resources

Also in Attendance:

Councillor D Crow and M L Ayling

Officers Present:

Russell Allison	Housing Enabling and Development Manager
Siraj Choudhury	Head of Governance, People & Performance
Amanda Kendall	Head of Crawley Homes
Carolin Martlew	Head of Corporate Finance
Mez Matthews	Democratic Services Officer
Becca Williams	Procurement Manager

Apologies for Absence:

Ian Duke Chief Executive

Absent

Councillor Y Khan

1. Disclosures of Interest

No disclosures of interests were made.

2. Minutes

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6 September 2023 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 11: *Proposed Land Disposal of St Catherine's Hospice Site* and agenda item 12: *Future Acquisitions for Affordable Housing Delivery*.

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. 2023/2024 Budget Monitoring – Quarter 1

The Leader presented report [FIN/633](#) of the Head of Corporate Finance on the 2023/2024 Budget Monitoring Quarter 1 report. The report set out a summary of the Council's actual revenue and capital spending for the quarter to June 2023 together with the main variations from the approved spending levels and impact on future budgets.

Councillor Ayling presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report [OSC/314](#) to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 25 September 2023. The comments highlighted that the Head of Corporate Finance had confirmed that the pay award variation was £280k as quoted in Appendix 1(ii) of report FIN/633.

Councillor Crow was invited to speak on the item and, in doing so, stressed that the housing issue was currently a dominating matter. In response to comments made by Councillor Crow, the Leader confirmed that clarity was needed on the New Burdens funding and additional funding to ease the housing issues was also being actively looked into.

Councillors Irvine and C Mullins spoke as part of the discussion on the report.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet:

- a) Agrees to note the projected outturn for the year 2023/2024 as summarised in report [FIN/633](#).
- b) Approves a supplementary capital estimate of £70,000 required for data migration to the new Benefits Online and Document Management System this will be funded from the Welfare Reform Reserve. (para 8.7 of report [FIN/633](#)).
- c) Approves a supplementary capital estimate of £169,100 for the repair of the Pit Lift at the Hawth Theatre funded by £120,300 from the revenue programme maintenance budget and £48,800 from capital receipt. (para 8.8 of report [FIN/633](#)).

That Full Council be asked to:

- a) Approve the addition to the Capital Programme of £1,052,466 for Disabled Facility Grants funded from the Better Care Fund. (para 8.4 of report [FIN/633](#)).
- b) Approve a supplementary capital estimate of £6,000,000 for HRA acquisitions of land or dwellings to be funded from 1-4-1 receipts of £2,400,000 and £3,600,000 of borrowing. (para 8.9 of report [FIN/633](#)).
- c) Approve the addition to the HRA Programme Maintenance budget of £6,792,086, this will be funded from SHDF Wave 2 Grant. (para 8.9 of report [FIN/633](#)).

Reasons for the Recommendations

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

7. Shared Procurement Service: Joint Procurement Strategy 2024 - 2030

The Leader presented report [FIN/629](#) of the Head of Corporate Finance. The report sought approval of the Joint Strategy for the shared procurement service.

The Cabinet expressed its unanimous support for the Strategy and the Leader thanked the Procurement Team for its hard work.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet approves and adopts the Shared Procurement Service Joint Procurement Strategy 2024–2030, attached as [Appendix A](#) to report [FIN/629](#).

Reasons for the Recommendations

The spend across the four councils is over £100m and is crucial to the way we deliver our core and discretionary services to our local communities. How the councils' source and deliver these services has a direct impact on the ways in which local people, communities and businesses judge the value that we provide and the quality of outcomes that we achieve.

The Joint Procurement Strategy establishes the Council's approach to buying these goods, works and services in a legally compliant and cost-effective way, whilst meeting sustainability and social value outcomes.

8. 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 items of business on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Act by virtue of the paragraphs specified against the items.

9. Proposed Land Disposal of St Catherine's Hospice Site

*Exempt Paragraph 3 -
Information relating to financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information)*

The Cabinet Member for Housing presented report SHAP/88 of the Head of Strategic Housing. The report sought to proceed with the disposal of the Council-owned land at Malthouse Road, and to lift the Restriction on Title on part of the site that was owned by the Hospice, in collaboration with St Catherine's Hospice surrendering their lease on the Council-owned land and the disposal of the land in their control, to achieve the proposal as detailed in the report. The proposal aimed to preserve the legacy of the site and to achieve significant social value in the continued provision of care and support, that was inclusive of on-site affordable housing.

Councillor Ayling presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report [OSC/314](#) to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 25 September 2023.

The Cabinet was pleased that the proposal aimed to preserve the legacy of the site and that it would enable residents to remain close to their family, friends and established life.

The majority of the Cabinet spoke as part of the discussion on the report.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet:

- a) Approves the disposal of the Council's land assets on the Malthouse Road site in order to achieve the preferred outcome as detailed in section 6 below, and to accept the outcome of the land receipt as detailed in section 5 below.
- b) Delegates the negotiation, approval and completion of all relevant legal documentation, to the Head of Strategic Housing, the Head of Corporate Finance

and the Head of Governance, People and Performance, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and the Leader of the Council.
(Generic Delegations 2 and 3 will be used to enact this recommendation).

Reasons for the Recommendations

The Hospice is due to relocate to their new premises at Pease Pottage by end-2023, and they are aiming to surrender their lease on the Council-owned land, and to dispose of their freehold interests in the remainder of the site, including a portion of the site over which the Council has placed a Restrictive Covenant.

The combined freehold interests held by the Council and the Hospice results in an assembled site that is jointly capable of achieving a greater outcome than if they were brought forward independently, and both parties are collaborating towards achieving this objective, whereby the Council is requested to dispose of its freehold interest alongside the Hospice disposing of their freehold interests.

As part-landowner, and in line with the Council's emerging Local Plan, the Council has restricted the future use of this assembled site for the continued provision of a care facility or to provide sheltered accommodation, and the market has been assessed accordingly, with the preferred outcome as further detailed in this report.

10. Future Acquisitions for Affordable Housing Delivery

*Exempt Paragraph 3 -
Information relating to financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding that information)*

The Cabinet Member for Housing presented report CH/201 of the Head of Crawley Homes. The report sought approval to acquire affordable housing opportunities from the market, to be funded from the HRA Acquisitions Budget for Crawley Homes ownership.

Councillor Ayling presented the Overview and Scrutiny Commission's comments on the report [OSC/314](#) to the Cabinet following consideration of the matter at its meeting on 25 September 2023.

The Cabinet was assured that space standards would be guaranteed within the housing developments. The Leader commented it was a positive report which would help unlock housing opportunities.

RESOLVED

That the Cabinet:

- a) Agrees that the acquisition methods, listed in Section 5.1 of report CH/201, be made available to relevant officers to maximise the Council's opportunity to purchase land and housing schemes for affordable housing delivery purposes, and that the Full Council be requested to delegate authority to the Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Head of Corporate Finance, the Leader of the Council and the Chair of the Governance Committee that the Constitution (and its associated documents) be updated accordingly.

- b) Agrees to proceed with the acquisition of the off-plan 'turnkey' purchase as referenced in Section 5.2 of report CH/201, subject to satisfactory due diligence and procurement compliance and budget availability.
- c) Agrees to proceed with the land acquisition as referenced in Section 5.3 of report CH/201, subject to satisfactory due diligence and procurement compliance and budget availability.
- d) That, subject to recommendations (b) and (c) being approved, delegates authority to the Leader of the Council in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing, Head of Strategic Housing/Head of Crawley Homes (as appropriate), Head of Governance, People & Performance to approve the award of the contract (including a procurement process if necessary).
- e) That, subject to recommendations (b) and (c) being approved, delegates the negotiation, approval (including a procurement process if necessary) and completion of all relevant legal documentation to secure additional affordable housing for the acquisitions identified in Sections 5.2 and 5.3 of report CH/201 to the Head of Crawley Homes/Head of Strategic Housing (as appropriate), Head of Corporate Finance and Head of Governance, People & Performance, in consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Cabinet Member for Housing. *(Generic Delegations 2 & 3 will be used to enact this recommendation).*

Reasons for the Recommendations

The Council has an active housing delivery programme aimed at addressing the pressing need for affordable housing in the borough, where Crawley has a limited land supply, and opportunities need to be explored from across the market, which may arise in a range of different forms, and Officers require the authority to explore viable options that may arise, and to proceed into contract when appropriate, following the necessary consultation.

Closure of Meeting

With the business of the Cabinet concluded, the Chair declared the meeting closed at 7.58 pm

M G JONES
Chair