

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

Wednesday, 16 January 2019

PRESENT: Councillor Nunn (Chair); Councillor Larratt (Deputy Chair); Councillors Eldred, Hadland, Hallam, J Hill, Hibbert and King

1. APOLOGIES

There were none.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 12th December 2018 were agreed and signed by the Leader.

3. INTENTION TO HOLD PART OF THE MEETING IN PRIVATE IF NECESSARY

The Leader explained that Appendix A (private) of Item 6 – The Vulcan Works Northampton – had been exempted under schedule 12A, Part 1, (3) of the Local Government Act 1972. Item 6 would therefore be moved to the end of the agenda in order to discuss the appendix in private at the conclusion of the meeting. At that stage members of the public and press would be asked to leave the meeting.

4. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES

Mr Hufferdine Smith addressed Cabinet on Item 7 - *Abandoned Shopping Trolleys* – and explained that although he was a Parish Councillor, he was speaking on his own behalf and not for the Parish Council. Whilst he accepted that measures were needed to resolve the issue of abandoned trolleys, he considered that the supermarkets were the victim rather than the perpetrator, and asked for more creative solutions to be considered.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

7. ABANDONED SHOPPING TROLLEYS

Councillor Russell asked whether abandoned trolleys could be added to 'Report it' app. Councillor Hallam advised that this could be done.

Councillor Hallam as the relevant Cabinet Member, outlined his report and stated that three quarters of respondents to the consultation had been in favour of the proposed scheme. He advised that technology was available to ensure that trolleys did not leave the supermarket site. Some supermarkets utilised this and did not have problems with abandoned trolleys. Councillor Larratt pointed out that his local supermarket used a system whereby the trolley wheels locked beyond a certain point. This had been very effective.

Councillor King considered the proposal to be a positive step forward.

Councillor Larratt asked for clarification as to whether the scheme could start immediately. Councillor Hallam advised that since it was not budget-related it could be commenced straight away. **(Note: see resolution 2.2 below.)**

RESOLVED:

2.1 That the results of the public consultation outlined in the report be accepted.

2.2 That schedule 4 of the Environmental Protection Act 1990 be applied to the whole of Northampton. The scheme cannot come into force until at least three months after the date of the resolution. It is therefore recommended that the implementation date is 1st May 2019.

2.3 That the fee for recovery be set at £65 per trolley.

8. GRAFFITI AND FLYPOSTING POLICY

Councillor Hallam as the relevant Cabinet Member submitted his report and stated that it resulted from a motion on a graffiti policy which had recently received the full support of Council. He considered that it was important to stamp out graffiti, particularly that of a racist nature. Councillor Hallam thanked Councillor Marriott for his assistance with the report.

Councillor Larratt stated that he fully supported the report.

RESOLVED:

2.1 To adopt a formal policy approach to graffiti and flyposting in the Town.

2.2 Domestic properties to receive a free removal service, upon completion of a suitable disclaimer.

2.3 To offer a chargeable removal service for commercial and other non-domestic property, upon completion of a suitable disclaimer.

2.4 To formalise existing education and enforcement processes relating to graffiti and flyposting.

9. BUDGET MONITORING: PERIOD 8

Councillor Russell noted that one of the main areas of pressure contributing to the current forecast overspend was homelessness. She advised that as Chair of the Scrutiny Panel on homelessness she had visited Manchester where a night shelter funded by Housing Benefit payments was providing an excellent service. She asked how the £1.548m forecast overspend would be funded. Councillor Eldred advised that this would be met from reserves.

The Leader stated that best practice from elsewhere was useful, and was grateful for the input of Councillor Russell to the Scrutiny Panel.

Councillor Hibbert pointed out that Housing Benefit belonged to the individual person and consent would therefore be required to hand it over.

The Head of Housing and Wellbeing explained that the overspend had resulted primarily from the increased costs of temporary accommodation – due to both increasing homelessness and shortage of social rented housing – rather than costs of the night shelter. Additionally, there were now no clients in bed and breakfast accommodation or housed outside the Borough.

Councillor Russell expressed congratulations on ensuring that no placements were currently made outside the Borough. She also advised that Manchester had worked hard to develop

an inclusive voluntary sector partnership, which was very important.

Councillor Eldred confirmed that the shortfall would be funded from reserves. The draft budget for 2019/20 would include £583,000 growth bid for housing options schemes.

Councillor Hallam clarified that item 3.3.4 was not due to an Environmental Services overspend and was not an additional charge over what had been agreed in the tender.

RESOLVED:

1. That the contents of the report be noted and that future reports will set out the actions being taken by Corporate Management Board to address issues arising.
2. That the capital appraisals approved under delegation as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be noted.

10. LOAN REQUEST

This item was postponed to be considered at the next Cabinet meeting on 6th February 2019.

11. OPPORTUNITY TO REDEVELOP BELGRAVE HOUSE AS AFFORDABLE RENTED HOUSING FOR KEY WORKERS

Councillor Russell welcomed the potential increase in the housing supply and asked for clarification of the criteria for key workers. The Head of Housing and Wellbeing stated that criteria had not yet been determined, but could include health, social care, teachers, and retail workers. The housing would be let through Northampton's housing register to ensure transparency.

Councillor Eldred as the relevant Cabinet Member submitted a report outlining the preliminary work undertaken and recommended that the scheme should go ahead.

RESOLVED:

1. That the principle of Belgrave House being converted into 120 affordable rented apartments which will be leased to the Council by Legal & General (the owner of the building), retained within the Housing Revenue Account and managed and maintained by Northampton Partnership Homes be approved.
2. That the action that the Council and Northampton Partnership Homes are taking to progress the development of Belgrave House, including the expenditure that is being incurred in relation to the assessment, design and 'due diligence' work carried out on Belgrave House be approved.
3. To receive a further report in May 2019 when approval will be sought for the Council to enter into an investment arrangement with Legal & General, using a financial lease, in order to facilitate the conversion and regeneration of the Belgrave House office building into a residential scheme of 120 apartments.

6. THE VULCAN WORKS NORTHAMPTON - UPDATE AND APPOINTMENT OF MAIN CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTOR

Councillor Hadland as the relevant Cabinet Member submitted a report and stated that this scheme had been ongoing for several years and was an exciting development of 59 business units in the Cultural Quarter. This was made possible by Local Growth Funding and money from the European Regional Development Fund. These funds had conditions of work commencing on site by March 2019 and spending the money in 2019/20 respectively.

If the scheme did not go ahead now, any future development would need to be started again from scratch.

At this point the Leader asked that the meeting continue in private so that discussion of the excluded appendix could take place. The public and press were therefore excluded from the rest of the meeting.

(Recommendations agreed in private session, but detailed below.)

RESOLVED:

1. That authority be delegated to the Head of Economy, Assets and Culture, in consultation with the Borough Secretary and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration to finalise the contract terms and to appoint the main construction contractor for the Vulcan Works project.
2. That the inclusion in the Capital programme of all resources spent to date and those needed to complete the project (set out at exempt Appendix A of the report) be approved.
3. That the acceptance of the ERDF grant funding in the sum of £3,062,315 and delegated authority to the Head of Economy, Assets and Culture in consultation with the Borough Secretary and Cabinet Member for Regeneration to undertake such actions necessary to enter into the grant funding agreement be approved.
4. That the continued appointment of Ridge and Partners LLP to provide project management and cost consultancy to support the project be approved.
5. That authority be delegated to the Head of Economy, Assets and Culture, to appoint the services of a design team for RIBA stage 5 and to enter into a contract, to develop final detailed design ahead of construction (these costs are accounted for within the total project cost).
6. That authority be delegated to the Head of Economy, Assets and Culture to commence the procurement of an operator through Ridge and Partners LLP to manage the completed Vulcan Works. Cabinet will receive a further report on the outcome of the procurement process and approval for the award of contract.

12. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Leader moved that the public and Press be excluded from the remainder of the meeting on the grounds that there was likely to be disclosure to them of such categories of exempt information as defined by Section 100(1) of the Local Government Act 1972 as listed against such items of business by reference to the appropriate paragraph of Schedule 12A to such Act.

The Motion was Carried.

13. VULCAN WORKS - PRIVATE APPENDIX

This item was considered in private.

The meeting concluded at 18.49