

NORTHAMPTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

CABINET

Wednesday, 13 November 2019

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

APOLOGIES: None

1. APOLOGIES

There were none.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting held on 16 October 2019 were agreed and signed by the Leader.

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

The Leader explained that Item 14 (Regeneration and Redevelopment of Berkeley House and St Mary's Court, Spring Boroughs – Appendix 6) had been exempted under schedule 12A, Part 1, (3) of the Local Government Act 1972. Since Item 14 was related to Item 10 it was agreed that Item 10 would be taken immediately before the private session.

4. DEPUTATIONS/PUBLIC ADDRESSES

There were none.

5. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were none.

6. ISSUES ARISING FROM OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEES

There were none.

7. HOUSES IN MULTIPLE OCCUPATION SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD) - DRAFT CONSULTATION OUTCOMES, PROPOSED CHANGES AND ADOPTION

Councillor Hill as the relevant Cabinet Member presented the report seeking approval to adopt the Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMO) Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).

Councillor McCutcheon considered that the report was good overall, although dovetailing of policies and joined-up thinking was very important. The requirement for HMOs was related to the lack of new homes. There were matters of detail which would need to be resolved during implementation.

Councillor Stone expressed concern at the time taken to make progress. There was no evidence that more HMOs were needed – people were being forced into HMOs because other housing was not available. All rooms should have en-suite facilities and the standard room size needed to be larger.

Councillor Stone referred to the second point under 2.1.1 on page 29. She considered that HMOs had adversely affected the character and amenity of local areas – particularly when there was a high turnover of residents and neighbours did not know each other.

Councillor Hill stated that progress had been dictated by the strict conditions of the Planning Inspectorate. It was important that processes were followed and this had resulted in a strong and robust policy.

The Head of Planning pointed out that HMO room sizes were standard and that work had been done with Housing regarding this.

RESOLVED:

- 2.1 Cabinet agreed the policy responses to the public consultation exercise held between August and October 2019 as set out in paragraph 3.2.5 below, and
- 2.2 Cabinet approved the adoption of the Houses in Multiple Occupation Supplementary Document (Appendix 1) which takes into account the responses to the public consultation exercise
- 2.3 Cabinet agreed that the Head of Planning be given delegated authority in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning to make any necessary minor amendments, including spelling and changes in the format of the SPD where they do not alter the intent of the SPD, prior to its publication.

8. PARKING STANDARDS SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD) - DRAFT CONSULTATION OUTCOMES, PROPOSED CHANGES AND ADOPTION

Councillor Hill as the relevant Cabinet Member presented the report seeking approval to adopt the Parking Standards SPD.

Councillor McCutcheon noted that one of the difficulties of increasing numbers of HMOs was additional parking requirements. This SPD would give grounds for refusal of HMOs in unsuitable areas and would be useful for the Planning Committee.

RESOLVED:

- 2.1 Cabinet approved the adoption of the Parking Standards Supplementary Planning Document.
- 2.2 Cabinet agreed that the Head of Planning be given delegated authority in consultation with Cabinet Member for Planning to make any necessary minor amendments, including spelling and changes in the format of the SPD where they do not alter the intent of the SPD prior to its publication.

9. SPECIALIST HOUSING SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT (SPD) - DRAFT CONSULTATION OUTCOMES, PROPOSED CHANGES AND ADOPTION

Councillor Hill as the relevant Cabinet Member presented the report seeking approval to adopt the Specialist Housing SPD. It was important that specialist housing was in the right location, and was able to be adapted to the changing needs of residents over time.

Councillor Stone considered this to be a very important policy. In-house provision of specialist housing was better than private. New builds should be cost and energy efficient, and wheelchair access should be provided as standard. Appropriate specialist housing

provision supported quality of life across the board, and could save money on other services if implemented well.

RESOLVED:

- 2.1 Cabinet approved the adoption of the Specialist Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD).
- 2.2 Cabinet agreed that the Head of Planning be given delegated authority in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning to make any necessary minor amendments, including spelling and changes in the format of the SPD where they do not alter the intent of the SPD prior to its publication.

11. VULCAN WORKS - OPERATOR ARRANGEMENTS

Councillor Hadland as the relevant Cabinet Member presented the report which would inform the tendering process. On page 213, item 3.1.14, the final bullet point should be amended to read 'VWCH Mobilisation and Operation – January 2021'.

Councillor Birch stated that this was an exciting project. She questioned the robustness of the projection that 59 units were required, and noted that the internal fit of the units would be crucial in encouraging take-up by businesses. Since costs in Northampton were inexpensive compared to cities such as London and Birmingham, consideration should be given to attracting businesses from a wider area, not just the 35 mile radius mentioned in the report.

Councillor Hadland clarified that the 35 mile radius was not a limit, and businesses from further afield would be encouraged.

RESOLVED:

- 2.1 Cabinet noted the progress to date on the construction of the Vulcan Works Creative Hub (VWCH) as set out in paragraphs 3.1.4 to 3.1.7
- 2.2 Cabinet approved the procurement of a service provider to operate the VWCH as set out in section 3.2 of this report.
- 2.3 Cabinet delegated authority to the Economic Growth and Regeneration Manager in consultation with the Borough Secretary, the Chief Finance Officer and the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Enterprise to appoint the successful operator following the OJEU compliant procurement process as set out in this report.

12. FINANCE MONITORING TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2019

Councillor Eldred as the relevant Cabinet Member presented the report and noted that the increased forecast overspend was primarily due to pressures in the benefits area, temporary accommodation and reduced income from recycling. These were being addressed and reserves would be used if required.

Councillor Stone stated that she was disappointed at the lack of detail in the report. Councillor Eldred advised that whilst some additional detail could be provided, the report was not intended to duplicate the audit information.

In response to a question from Councillor Stone, Councillor Eldred advised that a business

plan was in place for the Guildhall, with functions and weddings being held on a regular basis.

Councillor Eldred advised that residents had the option of paying council tax as one annual payment, quarterly, or in 10 or 12 monthly payments.

Councillor Stone requested more information regarding the Veolia budget and noted the 4% built-in profit. Councillor Hallam defended the profit, since if the operator was not making enough profit, they would not deliver a good service.

RESOLVED:

- 2.1 Cabinet noted the contents of the report and noted that future reports will set out the actions being taken by Corporate Management Board (CMB) to address issues arising.
- 2.2 Cabinet noted the amendments to the general fund capital programme as set out at paragraph 3.5.1.
- 2.3 Cabinet approved a £0.500m virement within the HRA capital programme as set out at paragraph 3.6.2.

10. REGENERATION AND REDEVELOPMENT OF BERKELEY HOUSE AND ST MARY'S COURT, SPRING BOROUGHS

Councillor Hibbert as the relevant Cabinet Member presented the report. Seven blocks were to be demolished and 126 new homes built, as approved by Planning Committee in July 2019. The demolition would be separate from the construction to allow for archaeological investigation. Tenants would have the right to return and resident leaseholders would be protected. Councillor Hibbert thanked Helen Town, Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH) and NBC officers for their hard work in bringing this to fruition.

Councillor Stone as the ward councillor stated that the flats had been an eyesore for years and were not fit for purpose. The new development would be welcomed, although time and resources would be required to reassure residents, since there would be significant disruption.

Councillor Stone expressed concern that the social rents option had been discounted. The government had capped benefits, but not rents, resulting in poverty. She also warned against allowing 'gentrification' of the area, since it was a prime site, close to the town centre and railway station.

The Borough Secretary advised that Appendix 6 should be considered in private session, before returning to agree the recommendations in public.

13. EXCLUSION OF PUBLIC AND PRESS

The Chair 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.

14. REGENERATION AND REDEVELOPMENT OF BERKELEY HOUSE AND ST MARY'S COURT, SPRING BOROUGHS - APPENDIX 6

This item was heard in private, following which Cabinet returned to public session to agree the recommendations from Item 10 as follows:

RESOLVED:

2.1 Cabinet:

- (a) Approved the regeneration and redevelopment of Berkeley House and St Mary's Court, by Northampton Partnership Homes (NPH) on behalf of the Council, including the demolition of the existing seven blocks of flats and the construction of 126 new affordable homes, within the financial envelope presented in the exempt report Appendix 6, in accordance with the proposals set out in the planning application for this scheme, described as 'The Roof Gardens', approved by the Council's Planning Committee on 30 July 2019;
- (b) Approved the publication of a formal demolition notice for Berkeley House and St Mary's Court (affecting the seven blocks of flats within the area identified in the plan that is shown edged red in Appendix 1) and the subsequent demolition of each block of flats as it becomes vacant;
- (c) Resolved to make a Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO), in accordance with s226(1)(a) of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990, for the acquisition of the land and third party interests within the area identified in the plan that is shown edged red in Appendix 1 in order to enable the regeneration of the Berkeley House and St Mary's Court site and the development of 'The Roof Gardens' scheme;
- (d) Delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing & Wellbeing, the Borough Secretary & Monitoring Officer and the Chief Finance Officer, the authority to effect the making, confirmation and implementation of the CPO and to take all necessary steps to give effect to the CPO including the payment of any compensation in relation to the land shown on the plan in Appendix 1 including, but not limited to, the procedural steps described in Paragraph 4.3.10 of this report;
- (e) Delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing, the Borough Secretary & Monitoring Officer and the Chief Finance Officer the authority to appoint external professional assistance if necessary to meet the requirements of paragraph 4.3.10 of this report;
- (f) Considered and took account of the consultation feedback pursuant to Appendix 4 of this report;
- (g) Approved the proposed capital scheme budget of £15.9m which will include the scheme costs involved in the acquisition of leasehold properties, development costs i.e. standard construction costs, demolition and asbestos removal, any potential archaeology fees and finally, location construction costs;
- (h) Delegated to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing and Wellbeing and the Chief Finance Officer, authority to approve the release of the relevant funds from the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme following the procurement process and outcomes within the financial envelope presented in exempt report Appendix 6;

- (i) Delegated to the Head of Housing & Wellbeing, in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing & Wellbeing and the Chief Finance Officer, the authority to determine the rent levels and services charges for the new rented homes, based on the outcome of the Council's application to Homes England for capital funding to support the proposed development of 'The Roof Gardens'. The proposal is for "affordable" rents (80% of open market rents) but capped at a level which is no higher than the Local Housing Allowance rate; and
- (j) Agreed to accept further reports to future meetings of Cabinet on any issues that may require further consideration and decision by Cabinet.

The meeting concluded at 6:55 pm