

CABINET



THURSDAY, 20 FEBRUARY 2020 - 2.00 PM

PRESENT: Councillor C Boden (Chairman), Councillor Mrs J French (Vice-Chairman), Councillor I Benney, Councillor Miss S Hoy, Councillor Mrs D Laws, Councillor P Murphy, Councillor C Seaton, Councillor S Tierney and Councillor S Wallwork

APOLOGIES: Councillor S Clark

OBSERVING: Councillor A Miscandlon (arrived at 14.10 and left before the Confidential Agenda Item CAB24/19)

CAB16/19 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the meetings of 9 January 2020 and 16 January 2020 were confirmed and signed.

CAB17/19 BUSINESS PLAN

Members considered the Final Business Plan 2020/21 report presented by Councillor Boden.

Cabinet AGREED to recommend that Council approve the Final Business Plan 2020-21

CAB18/19 PARISH COUNCIL STREET LIGHTING UPDATE

Members considered the Parish Street Lighting Update report presented by Councillor Boden.

Councillor Boden advised he had some amendments to put forward and circulated two additional recommendations to add to the existing recommendations, namely:

- 3.1.1 Between the 12 Parishes, there are significant differences in the ratio the existing level of concurrent grant and the number of Parish streetlights. To help redress those differences, the figure to be used as the existing concurrent grant for the calculation in paragraph 3.1 shall, if it produces a higher figure, be substituted by forty times the number of parish streetlights in the Parish.
- 3.2.1 Between the 12 Parishes, there are significant differences in the ratio of the existing level of concurrent grant and the number of Parish streetlights. To help redress those differences, the figure to be used as the existing concurrent grant for the calculation in paragraph 3.2 shall, if it produces a higher figure, be substituted by forty times the number of parish streetlights in the Parish.

Members agreed the additional recommendations.

Councillor Boden advised that these additional recommendations would address the imbalance that had previously existed. It would ensure some contribution would be made towards the revenue and capital sides of the parishes' liabilities as long as they each agreed it could be accepted in full and final settlement of the dispute that has existed between the parishes and FDC. If they do not accept, then they will not receive the money on offer. Once the amendment is taken into account, what is being offered to the parishes in total, if they all take it up, is a one-off payment of £206,037

and a new annual payment to be made to them of £18,314. It is a generous offer but reflects the unfairness which has existed and seems to be a reasonable compromise.

Councillor Mrs French asked if that would then be the end of the matter. Councillor Boden replied that it depends on how many parishes take up the offer. If some accept it, then it would not be right for others to campaign for more. However, he understands that some parishes have already said they will take up the offer.

Cabinet AGREED to endorse all financial measures and recommendations put forward by the Leader of the Council outlined in paragraphs 3.1 to 3.6 of the report, with the inclusion of two additional recommendations at 3.1.1 and 3.2.1.

CAB19/19 CORPORATE BUDGET 2020/21 & MTFS

Members considered the Corporate Budget 2020/21 report presented by Councillor Boden.

Cabinet AGREED to approve the revised General Fund Budget and Capital Programme for 2019/20 and to recommend that Council approve:

- (i) the General Fund revenue budget for 2020/21;**
- (ii) the adoption of the Medium Term Financial Strategy;**
- (iii) the Capital Programme and funding statement;**
- (iv) the Treasury Management Strategy Statement, Capital Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision, Treasury Investment Strategy, Prudential and Treasury Indicators for 2020/21;**
- (v) the Band D Council Tax level for Fenland District Council services for 2020/21 be set at £260.46, which is no increase on the current year.**

CAB20/19 SOUTH FENS ENTERPRISE PARK DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS

Members considered the South Fens Enterprise Park Development proposals report presented by Councillor Benney.

Councillor Murphy asked that when further units are built could they be built larger than the existing incubator units. They are ideal for new businesses as a start but as they grow the units become too small for their needs so they then move out of Chatteris. Councillor Benney advised that is something that he is aware of and has had discussions with the Economic Growth Team regarding the provision of larger units for growing businesses to keep them within Fenland.

Councillor Seaton said that this is another excellent example of how Fenland District Council benefits from being part of the CPCA.

Cabinet AGREED to approve:

- the allocation of capital resources totalling £1,150,000, to include the authorisation to potentially borrow a capital sum of £1,000,000 and the contribution of land value in the sum of £150,000;**
- the acceptance of the CPCA Growth Deal grant and authorise Officers to undertake the necessary work to satisfy the requirements of the CPCA grant agreement;**
- delegated authority to the Head of Economic Growth & Assets, the Chief Executive, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth to undertake all actions to satisfy the requirements of the 'gateway' proposals as set out within the report;**

and subject to satisfying the requirements of the 'gateway proposals' namely meeting viability criteria and securing full planning permission,

Cabinet AGREED to approve:

- delegated authority to the Head of Economic Growth & Assets, the Chief Executive, Corporate Director and Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Economic Growth, to proceed with development and delivery of SFEP project, including the application of FDC's match funding contribution and the drawdown of the CPCA Growth Deal grant.

CAB21/19 INVESTMENT BOARD TERMS OF REFERENCE

Members considered the updated Investment Board Terms of Reference presented by Councillor Boden and following feedback from Overview & Scrutiny.

Councillor Boden said that the proposal is that if there are only two voting members of the Investment Board present, and in the less likely occurrence that they disagree, then the item will not go through. He said this is a highly theoretical situation but the rules now state what the procedures will be.

Councillor Hoy queried the wording in paragraph 1.2.2. of the Terms of Reference where it states "The Investment Board will comprise a maximum of two Cabinet Members...", and wondered if the third is a non-executive member, when she understood the board would be made up of three Cabinet Members. Councillor Boden said that it is a maximum of two Cabinet Members, but not including the Leader who is also a Cabinet Member. Councillor Hoy said this was ambiguous and felt it could be written more clearly.

Councillor Boden said that although he felt it was written correctly, he agreed it was important to get it right and to have it written legally in an unambiguous way. Councillor Tierney suggested the sentence be rewritten as follows: "The Investment Board will comprise two Cabinet Members in addition to the Leader (one of whom should be the portfolio holder for finance if that position is not held by the Leader), who will determine their appointment annually".

Members agreed for the amendment to be made for the point of clarity.

Cabinet AGREED the updated terms of reference for the Investment Board at Appendix 1 of the report.

CAB22/19 DRAFT 6 MONTH CABINET FORWARD PLAN

Councillor Boden presented the Cabinet Forward Plan for information.

CAB23/19 RESTRICTED MINUTES - CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

The confidential minutes of 16 January 2020 were confirmed and signed.

CAB24/19 24 HIGH STREET, WISBECH - CONFIDENTIAL ITEM

Members considered the confidential 24 High Street, Wisbech report presented by Councillor Boden.

Cabinet AGREED to proceed with Option B and the subsequent recommendations within the confidential report.

(Members resolved to exclude the public from this meeting for this item of business on the grounds that it involved the disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1, 3 and 5 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972)

2.38 pm

Chairman