

CABINET



**WEDNESDAY, 18 SEPTEMBER 2019 -
2.00 PM**

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

OFFICERS IN ATTENDANCE: Izzi Hurst (Member Services & Governance Officer), Paul Medd (Chief Executive) and Carol Pilson (Corporate Director and Monitoring Officer)

CAB20/19 PREVIOUS MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of 18 July 2019 were confirmed and signed.

CAB21/19 COMMERCIAL & INVESTMENT STRATEGY.

Cabinet considered the Commercial & Investment Strategy report presented by Councillor Boden.

Councillor Boden explained that further information would be available to members in November 2019. He proposed that an additional meeting of Cabinet be arranged to take place on Monday 4 November 2019 to consider this additional information.

Cabinet discussed and commented on the draft Commercial & Investment Strategy and AGREED to;

- **Authorise CMT to take all required actions to formulate proposals for consideration by Cabinet and Council on 4th November which facilitate the financial and governance arrangements necessary to give effect to the Strategy and the establishment of a Local Authority Trading Company.**

CAB22/19 COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT - 2020/21 SCHEME.

Cabinet considered the Council Tax Support 2020/21 Scheme report presented by Councillor Boden. He drew member's attention to the comments received from the Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

Councillor Seaton asked if it is a statutory requirement that the Council Tax Support Scheme goes out to public consultation. Councillor Boden confirmed that if there are significant amendments to the scheme, it must go out to public consultation and the amendments proposed are deemed significant enough to do this.

Councillor Boden endorsed that officers consider further modelling of the Council Tax Support Scheme as there is little evidence available to show the effects of changing the scheme. He highlighted that neighbouring authorities have varying discount rates of between 8% and 32%.

Cabinet considered the recommendations from the Overview & Scrutiny Panel and AGREED;

- **To the introduction of a fluctuating earnings rule to the treatment of Universal Credit**

with a tolerance level of £15 per week, subject to consultation. The £15 per week tolerance level to be reassessed next year to ensure the anticipated administration gains remain relevant depending on the income level;

- To continue with the current 14% contribution rate for 2020/21;
- To undertake further modelling of the Council Tax Support scheme during 2020 to be considered for implementation in the 2021/22 scheme;
- To go to public consultation on the Council Tax Support 2020/21 Scheme.

CAB23/19 FENLAND LOCAL PLAN ISSUES AND OPTIONS.

Cabinet considered the Fenland Local Plan Issues and Options report presented by Councillor Mrs Laws. She informed members that the recent Town & Parish Conference was a success and had been well-attended.

Cabinet AGREED;

- To approve the issues and options version of the Local Plan for public consultation in October/November 2019;
- To delegate authority to officers to make minor, inconsequential amendments to the document prior to its publication (in order to correct matters of fact, add clarity to the reader or amend the graphic design of the report)

CAB24/19 OPEN SPACES - PLAY AREAS.

Cabinet considered the Open Spaces – Play Areas report presented by Councillor Murphy.

Councillor Tierney said he was pleased to see such a high number of council-owned play equipment available to residents throughout the district. He added that this report does not include play areas that the Council may have helped fund but do not maintain and therefore the number of available play areas is even higher. He concluded that consideration now needs to be given to those parts of the district lacking in play areas.

Councillor Miss Hoy asked for confirmation that the projects would proceed with Wisbech Town Council and Manea Parish Council. Councillor Boden explained that proposals had been submitted by both Wisbech Town Council and Manea Parish Council and the Council are proceeding on this basis.

Councillor Boden proposed that Councillor Murphy and officers give consideration to formulating an appropriate plan for future year's works on existing play areas and equipment. He asked that budgetary requirements are considered as part of this research including the potential use of existing and future Section 106 monies.

Councillor Murphy confirmed that the Council do have a future works programme for existing play equipment with work scheduled for the next 5-10 years. He explained that whilst Section 106 funding can be considered there are alternative funding streams available to the Council too. He agreed to share this information with members at a future meeting of Cabinet.

Councillors Mrs French asked if she could discuss with Councillor Murphy the potential of a new state-of-the-art BMX track in March and the possible funding available for this. Councillor Murphy agreed.

Councillor Miss Hoy asked if information could be provided to members in relation to non-council-owned play equipment across the district as this will give a true reflection of all play areas available in the district although this was not time critical. Councillor Murphy agreed.

Councillor Boden endorsed this suggestion and said that by members having knowledge of non-council-owned play equipment, this will help determine requirements across the district.

Cabinet AGREED;

- To note the report recognising that the Council manages many play areas and maintains them safely;
- To proceed with projects with Wisbech Town Council and Manea Parish Council as part of the ongoing consultations with these two councils;
- To note the equipment FDC maintains and the current lifespan of that equipment as set out at Appendix 1 of the report;
- To give consideration to an appropriate work programme for future year's works to be carried out on existing FDC play areas to be tabled at a future Cabinet meeting.

CAB25/19 COATES CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL AND MANAGEMENT PLAN.

Cabinet considered the Coates Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan presented by Councillor Seaton.

Councillor Seaton highlighted two typographical errors in the report and confirmed that these would be amended prior to the document going out to public consultation.

Councillor Mrs Laws praised the report and added that Whittlesey Town Council had funded this project and are satisfied with the report. She offered thanks to Katie McAndrew (Conservation Officer) for her hard work on this project.

Councillor Boden agreed and offered further thanks to Katie McAndrew.

Cabinet AGREED;

- To approve the Coates Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan to go out to public consultation.

CAB26/19 DRAFT 6 MONTH CABINET FORWARD PLAN

Councillor Boden presented the Draft 6 Month Cabinet Forward Plan noting the following additions;

- An additional meeting of Cabinet to be arranged to take place on Monday 4 November 2019. The Agenda for this meeting will include an update on the Commercial & Investment Strategy report.
- Further information in relation to the Council's Future Work Programme for play equipment, to be provided to members at a Cabinet meeting scheduled to take place in November 2019.