

Record of Cabinet decisions

Tuesday, 24 October 2023

7.00pm to 7.49pm

Date of publication: 26 October 2023

**Subject to call-in these decisions will be effective from 3 November 2023
The record of decisions is subject to approval at the next meeting of the Cabinet**

Present:	Councillor Vince Maple	Leader of the Council
	Councillor Tracy Coombs	Portfolio Holder for Education
	Councillor Simon Curry	Portfolio Holder for Climate Change and Strategic Regeneration
	Councillor Lauren Edwards	Portfolio Holder for Economic and Social Regeneration and Inward Investment
	Councillor Naushabah Khan	Portfolio Holder for Housing and Property
	Councillor Harinder Mahil	Portfolio Holder for Heritage, Culture and Leisure
	Councillor Tristan Osborne	Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Enforcement
	Councillor Zoë Van Dyke	Portfolio Holder for Business Management

In Attendance: Richard Hicks, Chief Executive
Adam Bryan, Director of Place
Bhupinder Gill, Assistant Director, Legal and Governance
Phil Watts, Chief Operating Officer
James Williams, Director of Public Health
Jon Pitt, Democratic Services Officer

Apologies for absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Murray and from Councillor Price.

Record of decisions

The record of the meeting held on 26 September 2023 was agreed by the Cabinet and signed by the Leader as correct.

Declarations of Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and Other Significant Interests

Disclosable pecuniary interests

There were none.

Other significant interests (OSIs)

There were none.

Other interests

There were none.

Capital Strategy 2024 / 2025

Background:

This report presented the Capital Strategy, which set out the Council's priorities for capital investment to deliver its strategic aims and the process for formulating the capital programme.

The Capital Strategy was attached at Appendix 1 to the report and had been prepared with regard to the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy (CIPFA) Prudential Code. It sought to detail the framework within which decisions were made in respect of capital expenditure and funding, and the principles to which the Council adhered, in the context of the current capital budget.

The Capital Strategy summarised the Council's approved capital programme for 2023/24 and beyond, totalling £267.103million. It identified the sources of funding for capital expenditure and the opportunities for future funding. It also discussed the capital investment required to deliver the Council's aims as laid out in the Council Strategy.

Decision number:

170/2023

Decision:

The Cabinet agreed the Capital Strategy, which set out the Council's priorities for capital investment and provided a framework for formulating the capital programme, for approval by Full Council on 29 February 2024.

Reasons:

The Capital Strategy sets out how the Council sets its priorities for capital investment and the process for formulating the capital programme. It was therefore an important part of the framework underpinning the budget setting process.

Treasury Management Report: Quarter 1

Background:

This report provided an overview of treasury management activity for 2023/24 Quarter 1.

The report explained that the CIPFA (Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy) Code of Practice for Treasury Management 2021 recommended that Members be updated on treasury management activities at least quarterly. This report, therefore, ensured that the Council was implementing best practice in accordance with the Code.

The report set out that the Council's debt maturity profile noted £54million of debt was scheduled to mature in the current financial year with an additional £100million of debt maturing in 2024/25. Investment performance remained in line with peer authorities, however, the Council was a net borrower which would restrict the cash available to invest.

In relation to the Lothbury Fund, which had suspended redemptions as it tried to sell the assets in a controlled manner, a Cabinet Member asked what the scale of redemption requests was compared to the overall size of the fund, whether the length of the suspension was known and how the planned restructure of the portfolio would be undertaken.

In response, the Leader of the Council said that a solution needed to be found by 31 December 2023 or else the fund would be wound up. A large number of redemptions had been made and an exact figure could be provided. The other funds that the Council had investments in, such as the CCLA, were recognised across local government and there were no suspensions of those at this stage. The situation with regards to Lothbury would be closely monitored.

With regards to Lender Option Borrowers Options (LOBO) loans, a Cabinet Member referred to the report that explained that one of the LOBO lenders had increased interest rates and the Council had therefore decided to repay one £5m loan. The Member asked what proportion of Council debt was held in LOBOs and the estimated financial impact on the Council if some of the other LOBO lenders followed suit.

The Leader advised that there was no indication from the market that other lenders were looking to exercise the option to change interest rates. LOBOs accounted for around £100million or 50% of the Council's long term borrowing although this would change because of the Council's redemption. There had been a strong focus on LOBO loans in recent years and if any other lenders did decide to change their rates, decisions on the relevant borrowing would then need to be made.

The Leader also noted the questions previously raised by the Audit Committee, which were included in the draft minutes set out in section 10 of the report.

Cabinet, 24 October 2023

***Decision
number:***

Decision:

The Cabinet noted the Treasury Management report, 2023 – 2024 quarter 1.

Reasons:

In accordance with the Chartered Institute of Public Finance Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice for Treasury Management, there should be a report on treasury every quarter.

Chatham Centre Design Code - Request to Commence Public Consultation

Background:

This report requested Cabinet approval to commence public consultation on the Chatham Centre Design Code.

The report explained that Medway had been awarded £120,000 from the Department for Leveling Up Housing and Communities (DLUHC) in 2022 to produce an exemplar design code and design code process for Chatham Centre.

The Chatham Centre Design Code established a vision and associated design coding to deliver a connected network of distinctive routes and spaces and high-quality, contextual development that would contribute to vibrant and urban streetscapes.

Adoption of the Design Code would help to deliver sustainable, inclusive, and accessible development in Chatham Centre and aimed to diversify the scale of investor and developer engagement.

The draft Chatham Centre Design Code was attached at Appendix 1 to the report. A Diversity Impact Assessment had been undertaken in relation to the Code. This was attached at Appendix 2 to the report.

***Decision
number:***

Decision:

171/2023

The Cabinet approved commencement of public consultation on the draft Chatham Centre Design Code.

Reasons:

To allow the public and any other interested parties/stakeholders to review the Design Code in greater detail and provide their feedback for consideration by the project team, in line with statutory requirements for engagement on Supplementary

Cabinet, 24 October 2023

Planning Documents (SPD), as set out in national legislation and the Council's adopted Statement of Community Involvement.

To allow the project to progress to this important milestone and ensure that the project remained aligned with a programme which would see adoption of the Chatham Centre Design Code in line with the funding grant extended by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC).

The Great Lines Music Festival

Background:

The report asked the Cabinet to agree the annual hire of Great Lines Heritage to a commercial operator for the hosting of a music festival for an agreed fee, subject to the organisers meeting all the terms and conditions of a location hire agreement. A new Outdoor Events Policy adopted by Cabinet on 8 August 2023 provided a singular clear framework for professional and community event organisers.

The report explained that the festival would be a new major commercial event produced by Festivals Master Ltd, planned to take place at the Great Lines Heritage Park each year for the next three years.

Following the granting of a premises license earlier in 2023, the aim was to drive excitement around a brand-new set of events that the local Medway community, and those from further afield, could look forward to returning to each year.

Decision number:

172/2023

Decision:

The Cabinet agreed the hire of Great Lines Heritage Park to Festivals Master Ltd. from 2024 to 2027 to produce "The Great Lines Music Festival", subject to the organisers meeting the terms and conditions of the location hire agreement, including:

- i) All required permissions and licenses are obtained.**
- ii) Ward Councillors, residents and stakeholders are fully engaged in the planning process.**
- iii) All legal and regulatory requirements are met.**
- iv) Successful annual review.**
- v) The Council is reimbursed all costs incurred above normal service levels (e.g. waste management, traffic management, environmental protection etc.)**
- vi) The Council is exposed to no financial risk.**

- vii) **Medway Outdoor Events Safety Advisory Group's ongoing support for all plans including for:**
 - a) **Noise management plans**
 - b) **Traffic and parking management plans**
 - c) **Ingress and egress plans**
 - d) **Waste and litter management plans**
 - e) **Public and crowd safety plans**
 - f) **Children and vulnerable safeguarding plans**

Reasons:

Approval of this festival will:

- i) Generate income for the Council.
- ii) Generate increased economic benefits to the area.
- iii) Provide increased access to cultural festivals for Medway residents.

Gateway 1 Procurement Commencement: Medway Domestic Abuse Service

Background:

This report sought the Cabinet's agreement to commence the procurement of the Medway Domestic Abuse Service contract.

The report advised that the contract was for a community-based support service consisting of Independent Domestic Violence Advisors (IDVAs), who would work to increase the safety and reduce the risk posed to victims of domestic abuse and their children, by perpetrators of abuse. The service also provided practical and emotional support, advocacy, and represented the voice of the victim at multi-agency meetings.

Decision number:

173/2023

Decision:

The Cabinet approved commencement of the procurement of the Medway Domestic Abuse Service contract as per the option identified in paragraph 6.2.1.4 of the report.

Reasons:

There was ongoing need for a domestic abuse support service and the community based Independent Domestic Violence Advisor (IDVA) service also supported the requirements set out within the Domestic Abuse Act 2021.

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Leader of the Council

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Date

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