

CABINET

19 October 2020 at 5.00 pm

Present: Councillors Dr Walsh (Chairman), Oppler (Vice-Chairman), Coster, Mrs Gregory, Lury, Stanley, Mrs Staniforth and Mrs Yeates

Councillors Bennett, Bower, Chapman, Charles, Clayden, Mrs Cooper, Cooper, Dendle, Dixon, Edwards, English, Gunner, Roberts and Tilbrook were also in attendance for all or part of the meeting.

249. WELCOME

The Chairman welcomed Members, members of the public and Officers to what was the sixth virtual meeting of Cabinet. He provided a brief summary of how the meeting would be conducted and the protocol that would be followed and how any break in the proceedings due to technical difficulties would be managed.

250. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no Declarations of Interest made.

251. QUESTION TIME

The Chairman confirmed that no questions had been submitted for this meeting.

252. URGENT BUSINESS

The Chairman confirmed that there were no items for this meeting.

253. MINUTES

The minutes from the meeting of Cabinet held on 21 September 2020 were approved as a correct by Cabinet. The Chairman confirmed that these would be signed at the earliest opportunity to him.

254. BUDGET VARIATION REPORTS

There were no items for this meeting.

255. THE COUNCIL'S FUTURE FINANCIAL ISSUES

The Leader of the Council introduced this report outlining that the Council's 151 Officer had provided various reports over recent months highlighting the Council's current financial position and the scale of its financial issues for the future. Whilst acknowledging the lack of clarity, due to a variety of uncertainties, this report provided

Cabinet - 19.10.20

an update on possible financial measures, proposed by Officers, for Cabinet to consider helping anticipated future deficits, particularly from 2022/23. Although Cabinet had received regular updates on the Strategic Targets, this report provided an update following the Coronavirus Pandemic Lockdown, which had commenced on 23 March 2020, the detail of which had been set out in Appendix A to the report.

The Chairman stated that the Council's Corporate Management Team, had been working with Group Heads of services examining possible changes to service delivery that would assist the Council's Budget. These proposals had been set out in Appendix B to this report. The Chairman then invited the Chief Executive to work through the first part of the report and Appendix A. He reminded Councillors that the Council had agreed the ten Strategic Targets in 2019, long before the Council had any idea of the financial troubles lying ahead of it. Appendix A provided a target and timescale update for each of the targets listed. Members were reminded of the fact that for the last eight months; Officers have been tied up with the Coronavirus pandemic. However, it was appropriate, currently, for Cabinet to consider each target and its appropriateness in the current climate and the estimated revised timescales.

The Chairman firstly invited debate on the first part of the report and the strategic targets as set out in Appendix A.

Cabinet was very much of the view that Officer's focus had rightly been in responding to the demands of Covid-19 and it was accepted that this had had an impact on targets. However, Cabinet confirmed that it felt that all of the targets were still very relevant and revised timescales were noted.

The Cabinet Member for Technical Services, Councillor Stanley, made reference to strategic target (8) [Public Engagement Strategy] stating that this had been one of the targets that had been rapidly progressed and as a result of the pandemic as it had been vital for the Council to engage better with the public through better digital channels. He referred to the last Cabinet meeting where funding had been recommended for an enhanced webcasting service and that significant improvements were being made to the Council's web site in terms of design and content to make information clearer and easier to find, especially in relation to the top transactional services. Work had also progressed in looking at call handling and introducing web chats at a time when the public wanted to engage with the Council in different ways and were demanding to do this too. There was now an expectation through places like Amazon and Netflix that people should be able to communicate with larger organisations in different ways. This was right and the Council was responding to this and as it had become not just a personal preference from the customer prospective but a necessity to be able to contact and engage with the Council in different ways. Councillor Stanley stated that had been a lot of success and engagement around social media activity, with the introduction of the Leader of the Council's social media broadcasts and so this was a target that had progressed very well.

The Cabinet Member for Housing, Councillor Mrs Gregory, praised the work on housing [target 7] and confirmed some good news items against the target set. She stated that there were now 90 new housing units in the pipeline and that there would be

another 22 progressing further by the end of this month. The Council had also secured 2 temporary accommodation units of family size. There were also schemes where terms had already been agreed providing a more accurate reflection on progress. Looking at this, a scheme in Bognor Regis had been proposed for extension to provide a further two properties.

The Cabinet Member for Commercial and Business Development, Councillor Coster, acknowledged the distractions brought about by Covid-19 and stated that despite this much progress had been made in pushing forward the strategic targets. Examples were the change in governance [target 5] and the Public Engagement Strategy. Even regeneration issues were pushing forward, the details of which would be reported through soon.

The Chairman echoed the positives raised by Cabinet Members and re-emphasised that Covid-19 had been a huge and all-consuming distraction, nationally and locally for the Council and that Officers had battled to undertake this challenge whilst at the same time having to also complete the day job. The result of this was that Arun continued to see one of the lowest incidents of Covid in the country and he paid tribute to Arun's residents who had adhered to the relevant protocols.

The Chairman then alerted Councillors to Appendix B to the report. He stated that according to the Institute of Fiscal Studies, there had been a near decade of austerity within Local Government finance, with an average budget reduction for Districts of 40% and a decline in spend by the population of 23%. The medium-term financial outlook did not look good, particularly as the Government's own most recent figures referred to a reduction in growth of 5% nationally. The pressure on Districts was larger as they moved towards a Government "levelling up" through the Business Rate reset and the Fair Funding Review, which were still scheduled to happen in April 2021. The Institute of Fiscal Studies estimated that whilst the forthcoming unfunded financial pressures on County Councils would be around 1.5%, for Districts it would be around 8%, largely because of the nature in how Districts obtained their finances.

It had to be accepted that the Coronavirus pandemic had put additional pressure onto the Council to find new, and innovative ways, of balancing the books. In 2018, the Council's Vision 2020 programme saved the Council £3m pa on its revenue costs, which had helped to put the Council into a stronger position. But now the Council needed to consider more ways to balance its budget.

The Chairman drew Members' attention to Appendix B of the report which provided a list of possible avenues the Council could embark upon and which asked Cabinet to provide guidance to Officers on each of the items listed. Some of the items on the list had already been achieved, some were ongoing, whilst the remainder needed Cabinet support. Depending upon the steer from Cabinet, Officers would then move these projects forward in an appropriate way.

Cabinet - 19.10.20

The Chief Executive then explained the varying sections in Appendix B and alerted Cabinet to the Officer comments showing the areas that the Council's Corporate Management Team were keen to progress. In total there were 35 items for Cabinet to consider and prioritise and it was outlined that in response to whatever Cabinet instructed Officers to do, further reports would be forthcoming.

In debating this item, Cabinet was of the view that in looking at the Council's current financial situation and the possible financial measures that could be taken to help future deficits, attention needed to be given to looking at investments not just about making savings. Examples provided were Proposals 7 [introduce solar panels for car parks] and 11 [electric charging points] which would be investments in commercial activities which would bring environmental benefits which could also produce an income stream. The recruitment of a Commercial Manager was supported and seen as vital to progressing many of the proposals outlined. It was acknowledged that the Council would have to make difficult decisions and choices but that some potential schemes were not negotiable and were too important to not progress. These were highlighted and it was stated that they were already budgeted for, being the replacement roof for the Littlehampton Chapel as a cost of £250k. Another important priority was that of accessibility and making Bognor Regis beach accessible to all, this was confirmed as another priority which would be budgeted for in next year's budget. This was why the recruitment of a Commercial Manager was vital so that investments could be made to protect the lifestyles of Arun's community. All the 35 proposals were supported by Cabinet and it confirmed that they should be pushed forward to maintain the very high level of customer satisfaction in Arun.

A non-Cabinet Member stated that this was a long 'to do' list and involved a lot of work if all proposals were agreed. How would non-Cabinet Councillors be kept updated on progress. Would this be via individual Cabinet Member monthly reports or would a working document be sent out with timeframes and an update on progress?

In response, the Chairman and the Chief Executive explained that before any of the projects listed in Appendix B were progressed, update reports would be submitted to Cabinet or the appropriate Committee for approval. In some cases, some of the proposals would be automatically progressed by Officers. There would also be regular updates provided to Members through the normal channels, this was a starting point by asking Cabinet to confirm how it wished to proceed with each of the proposals listed.

The Cabinet

RESOLVED

The report be noted, and Officers be instructed to proceed with each proposal.

The Cabinet confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/018/191020, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

256. RESPONSE TO THE PLANNING WHITE PAPER - PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Councillor Lury, introduced this report stating that it set out a summary of the fundamental changes being consulted upon on the Government's Planning White Paper – Planning for the Future. These changes, if implemented, would result in significant changes to the planning system and the way in which the Council would have to operate. Councillor Lury outlined his observations – these have been summarised below:

- looking at binding house numbers and the top down approach – he could not find any reference on how to replace duty to co-operate and he had concerns about who would be the arbiter of constraints in an area, would the infrastructure deficit that Arun had, be accepted as a constraint?
- He had concerns about the extension of permitted development rights – where would a resident go to object and then where would be the quality control?
- On the Infrastructure Levy, Councils could borrow to provide up front infrastructure, but for large projects this would be a huge risk
- He had concerns on the idea that the public could get involved at stage 1, when there would be no details
- On the stripping back of local plans – this sounded like a good idea going from 7 years to 30 months, but was this workable?
- The new White Paper was not all negative – the new design code was great but how would you be able to get builders to build beautiful homes – how would this work in practice?

Councillor Lury stated that the Council's planned responses to the consultation questions had been set out in Appendix 1 to the report and that Cabinet was being asked to agree these. He then invited the Group Head of Planning to outline some of the main changes proposed.

The Group Head of Planning confirmed that the White Paper presented the most fundamental changes to the planning system in a generation. It was seeking to streamline and modernise the planning system by introducing 24 proposals which would be implemented by the end of 2024. This led to 26 consultation questions being asked and Officers had drafted responses for Cabinet to agree.

The Group Head of Planning then talked about the main proposals. The main thrust to the changes would be how Local Plans would be produced in terms of their content in that they would only designate three different types of land uses. Growth areas that would automatically benefit from outline planning permission, renewals for smaller scale developments, and protected areas where there would be stringent controls such as areas of countryside and areas of outstanding natural beauty. The timetable to produce plans would be reduced to 30 months. The standard housing methodology would be binding on Local authorities and plans produced would have to make provision to meet this by law. There would be more emphasis on design quality and a new proposal called "fast track to beauty". In terms of decision making, there would be a greater

Cabinet - 19.10.20

emphasis on digitalisation and more standard planning statements. There was also the potential for the automatic refund on fees if applications were not determined in time.

There were a lot of proposals to be welcomed, but there were also many questions that remained unanswered. The main issues were the distinct lack of opportunity taken to address climate change. The Government had made some positive statements but had not followed these through in the White Paper. The simplification to Local Plans were welcomed but timescales need to be realistic. There were also issues around public engagement which needed to be ironed out because there was potential for less public involvement in the process and short timescales to get involved at various stages. There were also questions around strategic planning and joint working with potential implications on income in terms of performance and numerous issues around additional resourcing. The Group Head of Planning outlined that the Council would have to wait to see what type of detail might come through and the likely amount of income that could be received if there was the need to create posts around design. Another missed opportunity had been to not address the issue of developers building without permissions and them receiving penalties for doing so.

The Chairman commenced debate and referred to question 8a. He referred to infrastructure capacity stating that although the Government had said that they would move to a system of funding it by Government up front, then recovering from the developer later, he was not sure how this would work and who would initiate and agree it. Looking at highways, the frequent answer that the Council received from WSCC, as Highways Authority, was in relation to the size of developments proposed which would only make a small incremental adjustment to traffic on a particular stretch of road, the accumulative effect of development did not seem to be addressed.

The Group Head of Planning confirmed that there were more questions than answers and that there was the need to consider Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) now and not just Section 106 monies. Large items that were not delivered through strategic allocations would have to come forward from CIL and would be down to the Council to determine how to spend these funds when received on an annual basis. There would be different reports being submitted for Member consideration later. On cumulative impacts, these were taken into account in terms of looking at what was committed through transport assessments, but these might not always be able to include small windfall sites. The issue of forward funding projects through proposals in the white paper would be a decision that the Council would need to take in terms of the amount of risk it might wish to expose itself to and the long-term issue of then recouping money back through the CIL process.

The Chairman then raised a concern over 9a [Do you agree that there should be automatic outline permission for areas for substantial development (Growth Areas) with faster routes for detailed consent? There was a caveat there in terms of who and how these decisions would be made, local residents would have less and less say over routine permissions than at current. The Group Head of Planning confirmed that the White Paper had that potential, though there were professionals who saw it very differently and saw public engagement being more front loaded. There was a big issue around outline or permission in principles from whether a site or area was defined for

growth in that who prepared that evidence to justify an allocation in a plan – there was a whole new level of detail that the Council currently prepared evidence base for. It was outlined that if this burden should fall on the Council then the burden should fall on the developers to do this, though nothing had been detailed in the White Paper that explained this.

Other Cabinet Members spoke thanking the Group Head of Planning for a most comprehensive report and for drafting some excellent responses. They confirmed that infrastructure was a huge issue that needed to be addressed and needed to be specifically linked to development in that it should not happen without the infrastructure being in place first such as highways, doctors and dentist surgeries and that the development of these should be the responsibility for the developer.

The Group Head of Planning in response confirmed that he was noting the comments made and that if Cabinet wanted to add wording or strengthen any of the responses supplied, would they be happy to delegate this authority for him to sort in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning. Cabinet confirmed that it would be happy for this action to take place.

Other comments made saw Cabinet confirming that it was happy that a more efficient and simplified planning system would follow the White Paper but that this could not come at the cost of local democracy. Some of the proposals presented were felt to be long overdue but that they missed some integral points, the main one being the climate change agenda and delegation on planning permissions i.e. building out. There was concern expressed over the large amounts of applications that were not moving forward making land supply worse. It was felt that the situation around infrastructure should be tied more with the developers and that highways were a big issue as were schools and GP surgeries, just to name a few from a very long list. The ability to have more input with large development was mentioned, as with a significant amount of small developments it was the accumulative effect that was causing concern, who then made the decision and stepped in, in relation to infrastructure and smaller development.

The Chairman then invited non-Cabinet Members to ask questions.

It was stated that historically, the District's infrastructure deficit had restricted Arun's ability to attract inward investment to improve the local economy and employment opportunities, this was why the existing local plan had sought to address north/south connectivity, it was felt that this area of planning needed to be included in the white paper as part of Arun's response. The Duty to Co-operate was introduced to ensure cross border and strategic matters would be addressed in areas without returning to the County structure plan rather than removing the Duty to Co-operate. It was felt that this should be extended to include infrastructure providers who had a responsibility. The removal of Section 106 and CIL was felt to be significant and would influence the delivery of infrastructure and so needed to be addressed in the Council's response.

Cabinet - 19.10.20

Others spoke confirming that they were delighted to see that the Council's priorities were sustainability, climate change and affordable housing. Concerns were expressed as to how authorities would respond to the remaining constraints evidence and in view of the District's unique location. Concern was also expressed over-growth and renewal areas. Overall, it was agreed that the responses provided formed a robust series of responses on these issues. It was outlined that a firm response needed to be added to ensure that the District's farmland was retained. Agreement was given to the idea of requisitioning land previously offered for landowners up rather than taking it from them. Any proportion on growth and renewal zones?

The Cabinet

RESOLVED

To note the contents, of and proposals, within the White Paper, and agree to the responses to the consultation questions contained within Appendix 1, with the comments raised at the meeting being added to the responses by the Group Head of Planning in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Planning.

The Cabinet confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/019/191020, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

257. ENGINEERING SERVICES ANNUAL REVIEW

The Cabinet Member for Technical Services, Councillor Stanley, introduced the Engineering Services Annual Review for 2020 confirming that this covered all aspects of the Engineering Service for the past year as well as identifying the issues lying ahead.

Councillor Stanley stated that there were several issues that involved consideration of significant financial sums and he invited the Group Head of Technical Services and the Engineering Services Manager to highlight the most important issues and to answer questions from Members.

The Engineering Services Manager explained that the report looked at the Council's engineering services operations looking both backwards and forwards. He referred to the Community Flood Fund which had benefited a range of schemes on the coast and inland worth around £10m across the District. The report sought a modest top up to that fund which would enable the Council to continue to bring forward much needed works by the Council and its partners. Turning to Pagham, the report set out how the Council had managed the situation following the natural breach and regrowth of the spit which was the underlying problem in the area. The Council was continuing with the adaptive management approach but outlined that it should be noted that the

current method of reducing risk to life and property relied very heavily on there being a reliable source of shingle and other various constraints. Accordingly, the Council was looking at all other options with its partners and outlined that the recently announced Innovative Flood and Coastal Resilience Fund would be explored. Regarding the Coastal Change Management Area, this was an investigatory way forward and it was outlined that the Council was not proposing a (CCMA) at this time, as this was not a straightforward process. The Engineering Services Manager then mentioned the other aspects of the section's work being internal drainage boards and issues surrounding the River Arun IDB.

The Chairman invited Cabinet debate. Cabinet welcomed the report and although had heard that a CCMA would not be introduced at this time, felt that the Council needed to investigate this with some urgency in view of climate change emergency measures.

Points raised by non-Cabinet Councillors related to Climping and a further update was requested. The Chairman reminded Councillors that the Climping frontage was the responsibility of the Environment Agency (EA) and not the Council, though the Council was in constant dialogue with the EA in terms of pushing forward a resolution to this matter. The Engineering Services Manager outlined that work behind the scenes had explored all ways that the Littlehampton Economic Growth Area (LEGA) scheme could contribute and that other methods of providing the defence in terms of a 'mini Medmerry', similar to that at Selsey was being investigated, although the Climping topography was not favourable in that respect. The Council was also looking to see if the Innovative Flood and Coastal Resilience Programme could assist.

Questions were also asked about Elmer and whether the provision of boulders over the years had improved the situation.

Following further discussion,

The Cabinet

RESOLVED – That

- (1) The report be noted;
- (2) The contributions from the Community Flood Fund at Paragraph 1.4.3 of the report be approved;
- (3) A £50,000 'top' up to the Community Flood Fund in the 2021/22 Budget be endorsed;

Cabinet - 19.10.20

- (4) Support be given to the Council making a bid to the DEFA/EA Innovative Flood and Coastal Resilience Programme;
- (5) The inclusion of £50,000 in each of 2021/22 and 2022/23 to be available for the purpose of beach material recycling at Pagham beach be endorsed;
- (6) Approval be given to the use of the Community Flood Fund to supplement the Coast Protection revenue budget, subject to approval in accordance with the scheme of delegation, not to exceed a total of £50,000 per annum;
- (7) Authorisation be given to the Engineering Services Manager to undertake the necessary preparatory work relating to the three new schemes shown within Appendix 1 to the report, and to make funding applications to the Environment Agency; and
- (8) Authorisation be given to Officers to enter discussions regarding new arrangements relating to the River Arun Internal Drainage Board in accordance with Paragraph 1.10.5 of the report.

The Cabinet also

RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL

That a supplementary estimate be approved for a sum of £30,000 (which equates to a Band D Council Tax equivalent of £0.48) with underspends carried forward to future financial years, to investigate the introduction of a Coastal Change Management Area.

The Cabinet confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/020/191020, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

258. PUBLIC SPACE PROTECTION ORDER (PSPO) - DOG CONTROLS

The Cabinet Member for Technical Services, Councillor Stanley, introduced this report stating that Dog Controls in Arun transferred into Public Space Protection Orders, or PSPOs, in October 2017 and would expire after three years. In deciding whether to replace them and in what form, the Council had taken account of feedback received over the three year period and so minor amendments were proposed which had been subject to a comprehensive public consultation exercise which demonstrated support for the amended PSPOs being adopted.

The Group Head of Technical Services then outlined the main amendments proposed which had been set out in Appendix A of the report, the Proposed Public Space Protection Orders.

The Cabinet

RESOLVED – That

- (1) The proposed Public Space Protection Order, to be effective from 6 November 2020 be adopted; and
- (2) The proposed Public Space Protection Orders as shown in Appendix A of the report be:
 - The Fouling of Land by Dogs
 - Dogs on Leads by Direction
 - Dogs Exclusion
 - Dogs on Leads

The Cabinet confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/021/191020, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

259. RENEWAL OF THE MAINTENANCE CONTRACT FOR THE HR/PAYROLL IT SYSTEM

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Corporate Support. Councillor Oppler, introduced this item confirming that Cabinet was being asked to approve the renewal of the HR/Payroll system.

The Financial Services Manager confirmed that the Council had the option of agreeing an ongoing maintenance contract without undertaking a tender process as permitted by Regulation 32(2)(b) of the Public Contract regulations 2015 and that Cabinet approval was sought to agree to the renewal of the maintenance contract subject to the procurement requirements being met.

Non-Cabinet Councillors asked questions. As this contract exceeded the EU threshold, it should be required to go through the normal tender process but that the Council had chosen not to go out to tender because of intellectual property rights to the system, meaning that it was unlikely that there would be any other providers who could maintain this system. It was felt that other providers should be investigated and pursued as the contract amount, nearly £190k was a large sum of money. It was felt that the renewal of this maintenance contract required further scrutiny before any decision to proceed in approving the recommendation was taken.

The Financial Services Manager explained that the annual cost was around £40k which benchmarked as being reasonable anything else would cost more as the Council would have to incur all costs of implementing a new system. This was the most economical way, to the renew the Contract with a capped increase in costs of 1% per annum for the life of the contract.

Further questions were asked which were responded to at the meeting.

Cabinet - 19.10.20

The Cabinet, then

RESOLVED – That

- (1) Agreement be given to the renewal of the maintenance contract for the HR/Payroll/IT system with SumTotal, on an 'Evergreen' basis, subject to the procurement requirements being met, as set out below; and
- (2) Delegated authority be given to the Group Head of Corporate Support to sign and enter into the renewal contract on behalf of the Council.

The Cabinet confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/022/191020, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

260. SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATE FOR THE PROCUREMENT AND AWARD OF A NEW HOUSING MANAGEMENT IT SYSTEM

The Cabinet Member for Residential Services, Councillor Mrs Gregory, introduced this item stating that it updated Cabinet and sought approval in respect of the procurement and award of a new Integrated Housing Management IT System with some of the associated project costs being met from within the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) budget. The new system would provide greater accessibility to services for tenants and leaseholders.

The Group Head of Residential Services provided some further background. She explained that the Council had been running the existing system since 2014 and that the current contract was due to expire in November 2021. The Covid-19 pandemic and the necessity to work from home had highlighted a number of system limitations, the conclusion being that the current system was not fit to meet future needs. The new system would provide the opportunity to implement cloud hosting; a modern customer self-service portal; contractor portal and an integrated document management system. This would result in a reduction of paper used with manual processes being replaced by electronic billing and integrated processes reducing the need for the customer to have to physically visit the Civic Centre. To start the procurement process, it was confirmed that Full Council would be asked to approve a Housing Revenue Account supplementary estimate of £160k.

The Cabinet Member for Residential Services confirmed that the new system would be a positive for tenants as it would provide them with self-service opportunities that they did not have now. Cabinet fully supported the procurement and award of the new integrated Housing Management IT System.

Non-Cabinet Councillors outlined that although they were pleased to see advances in technology, they had concerns about investing significant sums into a new system when the existing system had only been procured back in 2014. There was also concern that the request to approve funding for this scheme seemed to have come

out of nowhere and a request was made for the finances to be re-explained as what had been set in the report was confusing.

The Group Head of Residential Services explained the figures involved. She outlined that the current contract expired in November 2021 and so work was progressing twelve months in advance of that date to provide time to implement the new system, so this was a planned process. In terms of the total project cost this was explained by the Group Head of Residential Services and the Financial Services Manager. Having received this explanation, there were non-Cabinet Councillors who insisted to know what the outcomes from this investment would be. It was explained that there would be greater efficiencies in terms of transactional costs and that the self-service opportunities would provide tenants and leaseholders with a service seven days a week twenty-four hours a day. Until the system had been running for a period of time, it would not be possible to confirm what tangible savings could be made in respect of staff time and in terms of service delivery.

Further questions were asked about the business case for the new system and that sight of this was needed to see the full detail of the project and to ascertain benefits versus costs that would accrue and where would savings be made. It was agreed that the business case for the system as presented to the Arun Improvement Programme Board would be sent to those Councillors who requested it.

Following further discussion,

The Cabinet

RECOMMEND TO FULL COUNCIL

- (1) That a Housing Revenue Account (HRA) supplementary estimate of £160k [which equates to a weekly rent of 92p per dwelling] be approved for the costs associated with the procurement and implementation of a new integrated housing management IT system

The Cabinet also

RESOLVED – That

- (1) The virement of £240k from within existing budgets be approved - £140k from capital budget x25 and £100k from revenue contingency underspend;
- (2) Approvement be given to the procurement and awards of a 2+1+1 contract to a total value of £500k (inclusive of maintenance and support costs) of a new Integrated Housing Management System, subject to Full Council approving the supplementary estimate in Recommendation (1) above; and

Cabinet - 19.10.20

- (3) The ongoing maintenance and support costs for the new system of £50k of which £15k is accounted for within existing budgets be noted.

The Cabinet confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/023/191020, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

261. THE COUNCIL'S RESPONSE TO THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC SITUATION

The Leader of the Council, Councillor Dr Walsh, introduced this item confirming that this was another of the Chief Executive's regular updates to Cabinet and had been based on the weekly updates sent to all Councillors and partners.

The Chairman stated that unfortunately, only a few weeks ago, it had been thought that we were coming out of this dreadful pandemic, but things had since changed dramatically. Whilst the prevalence of the virus remained low across West Sussex, there were some peaks around and outside of the District that the Council needed to watch carefully.

The Chief Executive then guided Cabinet through some of the essential detail in the update report. He confirmed that the Council's Environmental Health team continued to support local businesses and workplaces regarding the new restrictions in place and that Central Government had allocated £75k in additional resources to assist this work. Also, funding had been provided to meet the £500 payment for those having to self-isolate. The Council was already administering this money to these in need, with this latest payment scheme being up and running quickly from 12 October 2020. Overall, in relation to Covid-19, the points made earlier about savings and income generating ideas, Officers would continue to work with Cabinet Members to reduce additional costs and raise additional income. Every effort was being made to try to keep Covid-19 costs to a minimum.

Before inviting Cabinet Members to discuss the report, the Chairman confirmed that he wished to have placed on record his tribute to staff who were keeping everything going in addition to managing the extra work as a result of Covid-19.

Cabinet echoed these comments and congratulations were extended also to the Council's Revenues and Benefits team who were actively now administering the £500 paid for those having to self-Isolate. Staff had managed to set up the payment scheme through the Northgate system very quickly and were very thoroughly scrutinising application received as the first two received had been fraudulent and picked up and dealt with by Officers.

Other question asked by Non-Cabinet Members were around Test and Trace as it was understood that this would become a Local Authority responsibility. Could any update be provided on this in terms of costings as it had been suggested that the company responsible to date had been charging for the service. The Chief Executive confirmed that WSCC would be administering this and that he was awaiting a response back in terms of costings. It was agreed that once this response had been received, it would be included in the weekly briefings that he and the Leader of the Council

provided to Councillors. The Chief executive was asked how much support Arun might need to give and it was agreed that the response to this would be provided in the weekly briefing.

A further question was asked in relation to Test and Trace and the support to be given to local communities. The question related to local secondary schools where cases had been reported that there were several year groups precluded from going to school. The concern was that some of these students were out and about in the community when they should be at home isolating. Did the Council have a plan to support local schools and how was it undertaking tracing these young people and preventing them from being out. The Chairman responded stating that this was a WSCC function as the Local Education Authority. The Chief Executive added to this stating that he had been in discussion with WSCC, from an enforcement perspective. The £75k grant paid to the Council was to be used to assist with enforcement and the 75k would be used for environmental health teams to be going out and working in the community. In terms of the issues raised about young people, part of the enforcement work would cover this type of enforcement.

Following some discussion, the Cabinet

RESOLVED – That

- (1) The actions taken to date be noted; and
- (2) It be noted that following the discussion at Cabinet on 21 September 2020 in relation to the recommendations from the Covid-19 Recovery Working Party held on 8 September 2020, the Chief Executive will present a report to Cabinet on 16 November 2020 which will prioritise the recommendations and identify any costs.

The Cabinet confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/024/191020, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

262. STANDARDS COMMITTEE - 24 SEPTEMBER 2020 - NEW SOCIAL MEDIA GUIDANCE FOR COUNCILLORS

The Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Corporate Support, Councillor Oppler, presented the Minutes from the meeting of the Standards Committee held on 24 September 2020, which had been circulated separately to the agenda.

Councillor Oppler alerted Cabinet to recommendations at Minute 226 [New Social Media Guidance for Councillors] which set out a new Social Media Guidance for Councillors which Cabinet was being asked to endorse.

In discussing this guidance, Cabinet broadly supported it.

Cabinet - 19.10.20

Non-Cabinet Councillors then asked a series of questions and raised some concerns around what the Policy recommended Councillors should not do.

Following a lengthy discussion, the Chairman proposed that the Policy be refereed back to the Standards Committee for further discussion and to allow that Committee to fully review the list of recommendations that Councillors should not undertake. This was seconded by Councillor Coster.

The Cabinet then

RESOLVED

That the new Social Media Guidance for Councillors be referred back to the next meeting of the Standards Committee for further discussion and debate.

The Cabinet confirmed its decision as per Decision Notice C/025/19102020, a copy of which is attached to the signed copy of the Minutes.

263. OVERVIEW SELECT COMMITTEE - 6 OCTOBER 2020

There were no items to be reported to Cabinet from this meeting.

(The meeting concluded at 7.56 pm)