

Public Document Pack

TANDRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL



Council Agenda

MINUTES AND REPORTS
SUBMITTED TO THE COUNCIL MEETING ON
Thursday, 19th October, 2023

David Ford
Chief Executive

Information for the public



This meeting will be held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Oxted and the public are welcome to attend. Doors for the Council Offices will open 15 minutes before the start of the meeting.



The meeting will also be broadcast online at tinyurl.com/webcastTDC. In attending this meeting, you are accepting that you may be filmed and consent to the live stream being broadcast online and available for others to view.



Information about the terms of reference and membership of this Committee are available in the Council's Constitution available from tinyurl.com/howTDCisrun. The website also provides copies of agendas, reports and minutes.



Details of reports that will be considered at upcoming Committee meetings are published on the Council's Committee Forward Plan. You can view the latest plan at tinyurl.com/TDCforwardplan.

11 October 2023

Dear Councillor,

You are summoned to attend the meeting of the Council on **Thursday, 19th October, 2023 at 7:30pm.**

Yours faithfully,

David Ford
Chief Executive

To: All Members of the Tandridge District Council

AGENDA

- 1. To confirm the minutes of the Council meeting held on the 20th July 2023 (Pages 5 - 8)**
- 2. Chair's Announcements**
- 3. Declarations of Interest**

All Members present are required to declare, at this point in the meeting or as soon as possible thereafter:

- (i) any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests (DPIs); and / or
- (ii) other interests arising under the Code of Conduct in respect of any item(s) of business being considered at the meeting.

Anyone with a DPI must, unless a dispensation has been granted, withdraw from the meeting during consideration of the relevant item of business. If in doubt, advice should be sought from the Monitoring Officer or her staff prior to the meeting.

- 4. To deal with any questions submitted under Standing Order 30**

- (i) questions from residents and others working or studying in the District; and
- (ii) questions from Councillors

Questions must be sent via email or in writing to Democratic Services by 5pm on Tuesday 17 October 2023 and comply with all other aspects of Standing Order 30 of the Council's Constitution.

5. To receive and consider the reports of Committees

- 5.1 Planning Policy Committee - 18 July 2023 (Pages 9 - 10)
- 5.2 Planning Committee - 7 September 2023 (Pages 11 - 12)
- 5.3 Housing Committee - 14 September 2023 (Pages 13 - 18)
- 5.4 Community Services Committee - 19 September 2023 (Pages 19 - 22)
- 5.5 Planning Policy Committee - 21 September 2023 (Pages 23 - 38)
- 5.6 Audit & Scrutiny Committee - 26 September 2023 (Pages 39 - 46)
- 5.7 Strategy & Resources Committee - 28 September 2023 (Pages 47 - 56)
- 5.8 Planning Committee - 5 October 2023 (Pages 57 - 60)

6. Any urgent business

To deal with any other item(s) which, in the opinion of the Chair, should be considered as a matter of urgency in accordance with Section 100B(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.

TANDRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

FULL COUNCIL

Minutes of the meeting of the Council held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Station Road East, Oxted on the 20th July 2023 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Botten (Chair), Sue Farr (Vice-Chair), Allen, Bilton, Black, Blackwell, Bloore, Booth, Chotai, Cooper, Crane, Damesick, Evans, Chris Farr, Gaffney, Gillman, Gray, Groves, Hammond, Alun Jones, Langton, Lee, Moore, North, O'Driscoll, Patel, Robinson, Sayer, Sharp, Shiner, Steeds, Colin White, Nicholas White and Windsor

PRESENT (Virtually): Councillor O'Riordan

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors Anna Jones, Montgomery, Pinard, Prew, Pursehouse, Smith and Wren

86. MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL COUNCIL MEETING HELD ON THE 25TH MAY 2023

These minutes were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

87. CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

(i) Town Crier, Caterham and the Barracks

The Chair welcomed Sonia Hunt, Town Crier for Caterham and the Barracks, to the meeting. Sonia was celebrating 20 years as the Town Crier, and the Chair paid tribute to her enthusiasm for the role and her diligence in performing it. He presented Sonia with flowers as a token of the Council's gratitude for her work.

(ii) Civic Events and Fundraising

Since the last Council meeting, the Chair had opened both the Caterham Carnival and the Warlingham Fair. The Vice-Chair had also attended a number of events on his behalf. The Chair was due to attend further events over the summer, including the Play4Ukraine football match in Bletchingley which was raising money for schools in Ukraine.

88. QUESTION SUBMITTED UNDER STANDING ORDER 30

A question had been submitted by Councillor O'Driscoll. The question and response is attached at Appendix A.

89. REPORTS OF COMMITTEES

RESOLVED – that, subject to the following amendment in respect of the 29th June 2023 meeting of the Strategy & Resources Committee:

Minute 78 – Rent Subsidy Applications

Reference to '*Tatsfield Sports Association*' in the second bullet point of the preamble being replaced with '*Tatsfield Playing Fields Association*'

...the reports of the following meetings be received, and the recommendations therein be adopted:

Planning Committee – 25th May and 8th June 2023

Community Services Committee – 25th May and 15th June 2023

Housing Committee – 25th May and 20th June 2023

Planning Policy Committee – 25th May and 22nd June 2023

Audit & Scrutiny Committee – 25th May and 27th June 2023

Strategy & Resources Committee – 25th May and 29th June 2023

Planning Committee – 6th July 2023

Rising 8.03 pm

COUNCIL – 20TH JULY 2023 – STANDING ORDER 30 QUESTIONQuestion from Councillor O’Driscoll to the Leader of the Council (Councillor Sayer)

I welcome the recent announcement that London-style contactless rail payments are being extended to Spelthorne by the end of this year. This step will make commuting for residents there so much easier. Tandridge residents have made representations that they would be keen to see this extended from Upper Warlingham to other parts of Tandridge including in Oxted, Lingfield and Dormansland?

Will the Leader of the Council join me in supporting the extension of London-style contactless rail payments to the rest of Tandridge?

Response from the Leader of the Council (Councillor Sayer)

I would be happy to support any representations you would like to make regarding contactless rail payments because I agree it would make it easier for many rail users in Tandridge. However, I also believe it is very necessary to keep a cash option available for those who are not able to use, or are not comfortable with, contactless.

The other thing I want to raise is the recent announcement of plans to close more than 1,000 rail ticket offices within the next three years, including those in our District.

A considerable number of residents have been in touch about this from around the District, expressing their opposition and concern that this will disadvantage large sections of the community, particularly the more vulnerable sections.

If anyone wants to express their views on the proposed closures, there is a consultation running. It’s a very short one, it’s only 21 days, so you have to be quick off the mark, but it’s running until next Wednesday 26th July. I think it would be good if as many people as possible could send in their views.

This page is intentionally left blank

TANDRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes and report to Council of the meeting of the Committee held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Station Road East, Oxted on the 18th July 2023 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Sayer (Chair), Chris Farr (Vice-Chair), Blackwell, Booth, Botten, Sue Farr, Gray (substitute in place of Robinson), Alun Jones, Moore, Prew and Steeds

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Allen, Black, Crane, Damesick, Gillman, Pursehouse and Nicholas White

ALSO PRESENT (Virtually): Councillors Cooper, Evans, Gaffney and Windsor

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor Robinson

90. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 22ND JUNE 2023

These minutes were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

91. LOCAL PLAN PROGRESS REPORT TO INSPECTOR

The Committee resolved to move into 'Part 2' for this item in accordance with Paragraph 3 (information relating to financial or business affairs) of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.

A procedural meeting with the Local Plan Inspector had been arranged for the 27th July 2023. The Inspector had asked the Council to provide documentation in advance of that meeting (ID24) stating that:

'It would be helpful to me in preparing for the procedural meeting if the Council could provide a document which details your suggestions for progressing the examination. In the document, please indicate how you wish to amend the Plan and why. This should include why your suggested changes are necessary for soundness.'

A draft document was presented.

It was agreed that authority for preparing the final version of the document should be delegated to officers, with a view to it being sent to the Inspector's Programme Officer the following day.

RESOLVED – that:

- A. authority be delegated to the Head of Legal Services & Monitoring Officer, in consultation with the Chair and Vice Chair of the Committee, to:
 - (i) amend the proposed response to the Inspector at Appendix A to the report (by incorporating typographical corrections announced at the meeting and making further revisions);

(ii) submit the document, as amended, to the Local Plan Inspector via his Programme Officer; and

B. a copy of the document referred to in A(ii) above be shared with the team from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities ahead of a meeting scheduled for 20th July 2023.

Rising 9.18 pm

THE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF TANDRIDGE

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes and report to Council of the meeting of the Committee held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Station Road East, Oxted on the 7 September 2023.

PRESENT: Councillors Blackwell (Chair), Botten, Chotai, Chris Farr, Sue Farr, Gray, Montgomery, Moore and Steeds

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors North, Groves and Nicholas White

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors Wren and Prew

92. MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON THE 6TH JULY 2023

The minutes of the meeting were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

93. 2022/1638 - HOLLOW LANE GARAGES, HOLLOW LANE, DORMANSLAND, SURREY, RH7 6NT

The Committee considered an application for the demolition of existing garages on the site and the construction of one bungalow and one building containing five apartments. The proposed development also contained a new parking court.

The Officer recommendation was to permit, subject to conditions.

Ms Fiona Matthews, an objector, spoke against the application.

Councillor David Bright of Dormansland Parish Council spoke against the application.

Ms Nicola Cresswell spoke on behalf of the applicant.

During the course of the debate Councillor Sir Nicholas White requested that the Committee consider a motion for the application to be deferred so that the plans for the proposed developments could be reviewed by the application with a view to lowering the height of the building containing the five apartments. Councillor Botten also requested that any vote for a deferral should also allow Officers time to establish verge ownership and to consider solutions for parking issues on the site. The motion was proposed by Councillor Chris Farr and seconded by Councillor Sue Farr. Upon being put to the vote the motion was carried.

RESOLVED – that the application be deferred.

94. 2023/121 - 14 STANSTEAD ROAD, CATERHAM, SURREY, CR3 6AA

The Committee considered an application for the demolition of an existing dwelling and the erection of four dwellings with associated hard and soft landscaping.

The Officer recommendation was to permit subject to conditions.

A recording of representations from Mr Robert Barber, an objector, was replayed to the Committee.

Councillor Mario Grasso of Caterham Hill Parish Council spoke against the application.

Mr David Ciccone, the applicant's agent, spoke in favour of the application.

Council Matthew Groves requested that the following motions for refusal be considered by the Committee:

1. *The proposal would result in a higher density development than the existing and would be an overdevelopment of the site, which by reason of the amount, scale and form of the development would have an adverse impact on the character and appearance of the surroundings contrary to Policy CSP18 of the Tandridge District Core Strategy (2008) and Policy DP7 of the Tandridge Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies (2014).*
2. *The proposal would provide a shortfall in on-site parking which would not accord in full with the adopted Parking Standards SPD (2012) resulting in additional on-street parking which would cause congestion and harm to amenity of existing neighbouring residents and future residents of the proposed development. The proposal would be contrary to Policy DP7 of the Tandridge Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies 2014.*

Both motions were proposed by Council Chris Botten and seconded by Councillor Chotai. Upon being put to the vote, the motions were carried.

RESOLVED – that planning permission be refused.

95. TPO/02/2023 - LAND ON THE SOUTH SIDE OF LONG HILL, WOLDINGHAM, CR3 7LS

The Committee considered a report on whether to confirm or otherwise a Tree Preservation Order relating to land on the south side of Long Hill, Woldingham.

The Officer recommendation was to confirm the Tree Preservation Order.

Mr Alex Rodrigues, an objector, spoke against the making of the order.

Councillor Deborah Sherry of Woldingham Parish Council spoke in favour of the confirmation of the order.

RESOLVED – that Tree Preservation Order No.2, 2023 be confirmed as made.

Rising 9.15 pm

TANDRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

HOUSING COMMITTEE

Minutes and report to Council of the meeting of the Committee held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices on the 14 September 2023 at 7:30pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Pursehouse (Chair), Damesick (Vice-Chair), Evans, Gaffney, Hammond, Montgomery, O'Riordan, Robinson, Shiner, Smith and O'Driscoll

ALSO PRESENT (Virtually): Councillors Chris Farr and Sue Farr

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor Groves

96. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 20 JUNE 2023

The minutes were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

97. GROUNDS MAINTENANCE OPTIONS APPRAISAL OUTCOME - HOUSING COMMITTEE

The Committee considered a report outlining the outcome of the Grounds Maintenance Options Appraisal as it related to Housing Revenue Account (HRA) land. This followed a review to identify the best option for delivery of the ground maintenance service across the Council as part of the Future Tandridge Programme. Grounds maintenance had been delivered through a mixture of in-house and outsourced arrangements. The report highlighted the recommendation for all grounds maintenance activity in the HRA estate to be undertaken in the future by an in-house team, supported by improved specifications and performance monitoring.

RESOLVED – that the Committee recommend to the Community Services Committee that:

- A) the progress made to date and the details of the Grounds Maintenance options appraisal be noted.
- B) the lot structure approach be approved.
- C) the delivery of Housing Revenue Account Grounds Maintenance work via an in house team be approved.
- D) it be noted that the resources required to deliver the preferred option will be recommended to the Strategy & Resources Committee to approve as part of a wider Future Tandridge Programme update.

98. COUNCIL HOUSE BUILDING PROGRAMME - WARREN LANE DEPOT FULL BUDGET APPROVAL

A report was submitted which sought approval for a full budget for the council house building scheme at the Warren Lane depot site in Hurst Green. The scheme involved the redesign of the existing depot site to rationalise it and free up approximately half of it to develop up to 22 new

affordable Council homes for families on the Council's housing register. The scheme was planned to deliver 14 x 3 bedroom houses, 4 x 2 bedroom houses and 4 x 2 bedroom flats.

The Committee had given approval for a pre-application budget at its meeting on 21 June 2022. A range of specialist consultants had been appointed and pre-application advice had been sought which had resulted in some redesign of the scheme. A public consultation would be undertaken prior to the planning application being submitted in the autumn.

Officers explained that the site was challenging to develop. A robust estimated cost was not available from the Council's surveyors for the abnormal work as the design work and surveys were in progress. These would be completed prior to submission of the planning application. A figure of £1m, was included in the full budget of £9.9m, had been estimated to cover the abnormal work. If the costs were lower, it would result in a higher land value transfer from the Council's General Fund. If the costs were higher, the decision on the budget would be revisited. Costs would be kept under continual review.

RESOLVED – that:

- A) Officers prepare detailed proposals for the development of the Warren Lane depot site in Hurst Green for a mix of 2 and 3 bed houses for affordable rent and submit a planning application to develop the site and that a budget of £9,937,406.00 for the project be approved.
- B) authority be delegated to the CEO in consultation with the Council's Leadership (as detailed in Standing Order 46 of the Council's Constitution) to procure and award a contract for the proposed development to the most economically advantageous tenderer, subject to the outcome of the planning process and construction costs being within the approved budget.
- C) the above approval to proceed includes the appointment of other specialist consultants and surveyors to act for, or advise, the Council and the commissioning of necessary reports to take the schemes forward through to completion, all subject to the Council's Standing Orders and Financial Regulations.

99. HOMES ENGLAND INVESTMENT PARTNER STATUS AND GRANT AGREEMENT

A report was submitted which sought approval for the Council to enter into a grant agreement with Homes England. This would secure grant funding for the Council house building programme. The programme had previously utilised Right to Buy Receipts as a form of subsidy to develop most of the schemes. However, the receipts were largely depleted and allocated to existing schemes, and the expected level of future receipts would not provide the level of subsidy required for the rest of the programme.

An application for Investment Partner status had been submitted to Homes England and was under consideration. A bid application for grant funding for the remainder of the units to be developed in the Uplands scheme had also been submitted to Homes England and was under consideration. In the future, Homes England grants would be sought for the majority of the schemes.

In response to Member questions, Officers confirmed that:

- successful grant applications would reduce the amount of capital that would need to be borrowed.

- separate bid applications would be submitted for each scheme.

RESOLVED – that the Council enter into a grant agreement with Homes England in order to secure grant funding for the Council house building programme.

100. LOCAL AUTHORITY HOUSING FUND - ROUND 2

Officers provided an update on the use of indicative funding received from the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) to provide accommodation to families with housing needs who had arrived in the UK via one of the Afghan resettlement and relocation schemes. Two purchases had been completed, The Council had exchanged on one property and offers had been accepted on four other purchases.

DLUHC had extended the Local Authority Housing Fund and the Council had submitted a validation form to indicate its preparedness to deliver six further properties under the extension. The report sought approval for the Section 151 Officer to agree to and sign the DLUHC Memorandum of Understanding and commit to the purchase of six further properties under the extended scheme. The funding would provide 40% of the capital costs for the purchase of three homes for the Afghan cohort and three homes for temporary accommodation. The total grant would be £1.3m and the Council would contribute £1.8m, funded through borrowing provided for in 2023/24 Capital Programme estimates.

In response to Member questions, Officers explained that three homes would help meet the increasing need for temporary accommodation. It was also explained that, in terms of provision of accommodation to veterans, their service within the armed forces was taken into consideration.

RESOLVED – that Members approve that the Section 151 Officer agree to and sign the Memorandum of Understanding, attached at Appendix A to the report, no later than 5pm Monday 18th September and commit to the purchase of 6 further properties under the LAHF Round 2, subject to the requirements of Financial Regulation 17.

101. RESPONSIBLE OWNERSHIP - PETS POLICY

The Committee received a report which recommended the approval of a draft Responsible Pet Ownership Policy. Officers explained that the Policy offered guidance to Council house tenants and Officers when considering pet ownership. It had been written following review of best practice within the sector. It was explained that permission for a pet would not unreasonably be withheld and Officers would base decisions on pet ownership on individual circumstances, household composition, the size and type of property and the size and type of pet.

During the debate, Members expressed the view that section 5.1 of the policy, which outlined the categories of pets for which permission was required, was not clear.

The Chairman, Councillor Pursehouse, seconded by Councillor O'Driscoll, proposed that the bullet points in section 5.1 be removed and that Officers make consequently amendments to the wording of 5.1.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was carried.

Members expressed the view that the period, set out in section 12.2 of the policy, which determined whether tenants vacating a property where they had requested a cat flap be installed should pay for a replacement door, was too long.

Councillor Gaffney, seconded by Councillor O'Driscoll, proposed an amendment to reduce the period from five years to one year.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was lost.

Councillor O'Driscoll, seconded by Councillor Robinson, proposed an amendment to reduce the period from five years to two years.

Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was carried.

Following questions from Members, Officers explained:

- discretion would be exercised when giving permission for additional cats and dogs. In using this discretion, Officers would consider the size and type of the cats and dogs, the type of property and whether there was a garden or not. Any costs to the Council incurred to ensure the property was suitable for re-letting would be borne by the vacating tenant.
- the policy would be monitored through tenancy audits undertaken by Housing Officers. Members expressed the importance of timely and effective enforcement and of residents knowing what action may be taken against them if there is a breach in the tenancy agreement conditions.
- the policy would not apply to Housing Association tenants, unless the Council were to take over the management of Housing Association stock.
- in the case of a resident wishing to downsize to a smaller Council property, Officers would discuss existing pets with the tenant during the application process to downsize and some discretion would be applied.

RESOLVED – that the Committee approves the Responsible Pet Ownership Policy as attached at Appendix A to the report, as amended.

102. QUARTER 1 2023/24 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - HOUSING COMMITTEE

The Committee received a report outlining the Quarter 1 2023/24 performance against Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). Three of the KPIs had not been met, with appendix A to the report providing explanation as to why.

The Committee also received the Housing Risk Register at appendix B to the report for July 2023 which included the mitigating actions taken against the identified risks.

The current position with regard to the Council House Building Programme at the end of Quarter 1 was outlined in appendix C to the report.

In response to Member questions, Officers confirmed that:

- a reason for closed risk H1 would be circulated to Members.
- the Council house building programme scheme at Windmill Close was progressing and it was estimated that the scheme would be delivered in spring 2024.

RESOLVED – that the Quarter 1 2023-2024 performance and risks for the Housing Committee be noted.

103. QUARTER 1 2023/24 BUDGET MONITORING - HOUSING COMMITTEE

The Committee received a report outlining the financial position of the Revenue and Capital budgets for the Committee, including the Housing Revenue Account (HRA), as of Quarter 1 2023/24.

The report set out an outturn variance of £15k for the Housing General Fund as a result of increased costs for planned repairs and tree works at Meadowside Mobile Home Park. Increasing costs of temporary accommodation was a risk being monitored, along with any knock on effects to the housing benefit budget. Ringfenced reserves for Housing Benefit could be called upon if the budget was overspent and the Government had provided an additional grant of £154k to assist with temporary accommodation costs. Savings of £60k had been delivered. £150k of savings, related to homelessness, was deemed to have some risk due to uncertainty around the need for temporary accommodation.

In the HRA, there was an overspend of £60k due to a software upgrade. £150k of savings on the HRA were expected in relation to housing management salaries.

The Housing General Fund Capital Budget related to Disability Facilities Grants and had been set at £642k, which included a carry forward from 2022/23 of £139k. There was expected to be surplus capital of £139k in 2023/24 and this would be reprofiled into 2024/25. The budget for the HRA Capital Programme was set at £19.9m, which included £4.5m carried forward from 2022/23. The capital schemes had been reviewed and there was a projected slippage of £3.8m in 2023/24 which would be reprofiled to 2024/25.

In response to Member questions, Officers explained that slippage of around 20% in the HRA budget could be expected due to various factors which would result in delays in the development of existing schemes.

RESOLVED – that the Committee’s forecast Revenue and Capital budget positions as at Quarter 1 / M3 (June) 2023/24 be noted.

Rising 8.55 pm

This page is intentionally left blank

TANDRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

Minutes and report to Council of the meeting of the Committee held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Station Road East, Oxted on the 19 September 2023 at 7:30pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Wren (Chair), Shiner (Vice-Chair), Bilton, Black, Crane, North, O'Driscoll, Patel, Sharp, Windsor and Gaffney (Substitute) (In place of Lee)

ALSO PRESENT (Virtually): Councillors Moore, Chris Farr, Sue Farr, Hammond and Pursehouse

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor Lee

104. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 15 JUNE 2023

The minutes were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

The Chair made the following statement on minute 31 (Review of Dog Walking Policy):

“Unfortunately, some misleading information has recently been shared in the public domain via the Woldingham Magazine by a councillor, this was then shared extensively by others across social media, suggesting that the Council is proposing that all dogs will need to be on a 1.5m lead throughout the district.

This is totally incorrect and any proposals asking for dogs to be on leads will only be for certain limited areas. The Council is keen to get a proportionate balance between asking for additional interventions that support heightened dog control in some mix use public spaces. All proposals progressed will be well consulted on, with the opportunity for residents and stakeholders to share their views on what types of controls they feel are necessary and in which spaces.

You will recall that in June, the Community Services Committee discussed what more the Council can do to promote responsible dog ownership and dog control. With the aim of enabling residents and visitors to use and enjoy public spaces without experiencing dog related anti-social behaviour.

With the sad death of a dog walker locally earlier this year and the well-publicised increase in dog attacks nationally, it is important that the Council considers what measures it can take to reduce the risk to the public and antisocial behaviour in the district.

After the June Committee meeting, a councillor and officer task and finish group was set up to progress the work in this area. This group is leading on behalf of the Council:

1. Work with stakeholders to encourage responsible dog ownership.
2. The review of dog licencing and dog walking policies, (we heard very thoughtful comments from Hayley Herbert-Hamilton in her role owner of a dog walking business).
3. The scope and development of the future consultation on the introduction of PSPOs.

This work will be reported on to the Committee later in the year.

I will remind members that before information is published in the public domain it's important to check with officers or myself that what they are sharing is accurate. The misleading statement made has led to a lot of additional work for officers and councillors across the whole district, but more importantly has caused unnecessary concern to residents across Tandridge.

It is imperative this does not happen again, particularly with such an emotive issue as this one."

A Member asked for an update on the UK Shared Prosperity Fund. The Chief Finance Officer advised that final nominations to the working group had been received and an initial meeting would be arranged imminently.

105. FUTURE TANDRIDGE PROGRAMME COMMUNITY SERVICES - GROUNDS MAINTENANCE OPTIONS APPRAISAL OUTCOME

The Committee considered a report outlining the outcome of the Grounds Maintenance Options Appraisal. This followed a review to identify the best option for delivery of the ground maintenance service across the Council as part of the Future Tandridge Programme. Grounds maintenance had been delivered through a mixture of in-house and outsourced arrangements. Officers highlighted the recommendation that a future hybrid delivery model of in-house and outsourced work based on logical lot structures be implemented. Future contractors and the in-house team would work to improve specification and would be subject to rigorous performance monitoring.

RESOLVED – that:

- A) the progress made to date and the details of the Grounds Maintenance options appraisal be noted.
- B) the lot structure approach be approved
- C) that the resources required to deliver the preferred option will be recommended to Strategy & Resources Committee to approve as part of a wider Future Tandridge Programme update, be noted.

106. GRANT ALLOCATIONS 2023/24: VOLUNTARY SECTOR AND TANDRIDGE TOGETHER COMMUNITY LOTTERY

A report was presented in connection with the Committee's grants budget. In 2023/24, the Committee had committed to spend £249,143, allocating grants to community and voluntary sector organisations. The report summarised the grants provided to local organisations and highlighted the contributions they made in providing services to residents.

It was noted that ticket sales for the Community Lottery had reduced this year, and members were encouraged to promote the lottery to residents.

In response to questions from Members, Officers confirmed:

- the same process used to determine grants this year, through a sub-group of the Committee, would be used for grant determination in 2024/25. The list of those considered for grant funding would include the Surrey Museums Consultative Committee. Members commented that the process worked well last year.

- the Council received £20k from Surrey County Council which went towards the East Surrey Rural Transport advice line. £38k was provided by the Council for the provision of the Community transport service.

RESOLVED – that:

- A) for the allocation of voluntary grants in 2023/24 the current levels of funding allocations for the grants for 2023/24 be noted.
- B) the application process for the Tandridge Lottery Community grants 2023/24 to follow the timetable set out in paragraph 19 of the report.
- C) the overall total budget for small grants to be determined in December 2023 will be based on the money in the Tandridge Together Community Fund. This will be a minimum of £20,000, with any shortfall being met from the Council's future budgets.
- D) the criteria for assessing grant applications for the Tandridge Lottery Community grant 2023/2024 process be as per Appendix B to the report; and
- E) the award of Tandridge Lottery Community grants to be considered by a sub-group of the Tandridge Health & Wellbeing Board before being taken to the full Board in January 2024 to agree a formal recommendation. The recommendations will be submitted to the Deputy Chief Executive for formal agreement.

107. QUARTER 1 2023/24 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

The Committee received a report that contained data on the key performance indicators for Quarter 1 2023-24. The report covered operational services and it was mentioned that future reports would include more services within the Committee's remit.

Officers highlighted that one target, street cleansing, was not met as a result of staffing and reliability of the mechanical sweeper. The sweeper was currently operational, and staff were being trained to cover periods sickness or annual leave.

It was also noted that a trial of orange food waste caddies would begin on a limited basis to help improve the service and reduce investigation time for missed collections.

Members expressed gratitude for the inclusion of Key Performance Indicators and the efforts of officers to improve the service.

During the debate Members asked questions and Officers responded by explaining that:

- street cleansing concerns in certain areas of the District highlighted by members would be looked into. Staffing reductions had meant that achieving an 8-week street cleansing schedule was a challenge, officers were looking at how the schedule was structured and how the service could be delivered across the District. Officers explained that the environmental cleanliness standard of streets was measured based on 30m sections of chosen streets. Work was undertaken with Surrey County Council on coordinating gully cleansing and pothole clearances.
- the performance indicators reported were chosen based on the perceived level of resident interest. Officers would consider Member feedback in order to expand future performance indicators.

- the number of stray dogs that had been collected by the Dog Warden in the year to date was 113.
- Officers were looking into how to digitise ground maintenance monitoring to assist with reporting.
- difficulties in establishing the owners of fly-tipping incidents were due to the challenges in collecting substantial evidence to identify and prosecute.
- Officers were awaiting further samples before assessing when the public toilets in Godstone might reopen.

RESOLVED – that the Quarter 1 2023-2024 performance indicators for the Community Services Committee be noted.

108. QUARTER 1 2023/24 BUDGET MONITORING - COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE

The Committee received a report outlining the financial position of the Committee's 2023/24 Revenue (£4,613k) and Capital (£2,077k) budgets as of Quarter 1 2023/24. The report set out a Month 3 forecast for a full-year balanced budget, with a number of offsetting risks and opportunities being managed within the budget.

A review had been undertaken to ensure the capital programme could be delivered in 2023/24. Following this, the capital budget forecast outturn was £1,740k, a variance of £337k which would be reprofiled to 2024/25. The variance was made up of £215k from Waste and Recycling and £122k from Community Infrastructure and Assets.

Of the £388k savings target, £198k had already been achieved while £26k had not been achieved due to delays in delivering savings in Regulatory Services, shared with Mole Valley.

During the debate Members asked questions and Officers responded to explain that capital carry forwards from previous years in relation to parks, playgrounds and open spaces had not yet been invested, primarily due to capacity issues. Officers recognised that this was a priority area and were in the process of recruiting to positions to oversee and drive forward delivery.

RESOLVED – that the Committee's forecast Revenue and Capital budget positions as at Quarter 1/M3 (June) 2023/24 be noted.

Rising 8.25 pm

TANDRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

Minutes and report to Council of the meeting of the Committee held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Station Road East, Oxted on the 21 September 2023 at 7:30pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Sayer (Chair), Chris Farr (Vice-Chair), Blackwell, Booth, Sue Farr, Gray (Substitute) (In place of Botten), Moore, Prew and Steeds

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Crane, Gillman, O'Driscoll, Nicholas White and Wren

ALSO PRESENT (Virtually): Councillors Gaffney, Pursehouse and Windsor

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors Botten, Alun Jones and Robinson

109. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 18TH JULY 2023

These minutes were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

110. LOCAL PLAN OPTIONS

Following the Local Plan procedural meeting on the 27th July 2023, the Inspector had written to the Council advising that, in his view, it would not be possible to make the Plan sound and that he would recommend non-adoption. Two options were presented:

1. the Inspector writes a report concluding the Plan is unsound and not adopted; and
2. the Council withdraws the Plan.

A report, attached as appendix A to these minutes, was considered which assessed the relative merits of both options to assist the Committee in making a recommendation to Full Council.

The Chair expressed great disappointment that the Council's suggestions and arguments for retaining a Local Plan with main modifications (TED 61 and TED 58) had not been accepted and considered that the Council now owed it to residents to ask the Inspector to write a report.

The Committee debated the matter and voted unanimously in support of Option 1. It was confirmed that receipt of the Inspector's report would end the dialogue between himself and the Council.

COUNCIL DECISION
(subject to ratification by Council)

RECOMMENDED – that Option 1 (the Inspector writes a report setting out why the submitted Plan is unsound and should not be adopted) be pursued.

111. PLANNING PERFORMANCE AGREEMENT FRAMEWORK

The Committee considered proposals for introducing voluntary Planning Performance Agreements (PPAs) as part of a pre-application service. Their purpose was to establish transparent procedures for determining large and/or complex applications and to encourage joint working with applicants and other interested parties (they are not a means of obtaining consent). A suggested pro-forma was presented as a basis for guiding the process for agreeing a PPA and which could be adapted to meet the bespoke requirements of a particular application.

The accompanying report also identified key principles which would need to be applied when setting an associated charging scheme, namely:

- the need to apply reasonable, costed charges for discretionary services which reflect both direct costs and an appropriate recovery of overheads
- the recharging of one-off external support costs (e.g. highway modelling)
- transparency, consistency and benchmarking against other Local Authorities
- an annual review process.

In response to the debate, it was confirmed that Ward Members would be notified when a PPA had been entered into and would be kept informed about the subsequent key stages of the process. The Chief Planning Officer considered that developers would probably be keen to engage local Councillors. However, it was acknowledged that such Member involvement would need to take account of the Planning Protocol.

RESOLVED – that:

- A. the Planning Performance Agreement (PPA) pro-forma, as attached in Appendix A to the report, be agreed in principle as the basis for negotiating performance agreements with developers on major and largescale applications; and
- B. authority be delegated to the Chief Planning Officer, in consultation with the Chairs of the Planning Committee and Planning Policy Committee, to set the appropriate scale of charges.

112. QUARTER 1 2023/24 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

Information was presented about:

- key planning performance indicators for the first quarter of 2023/24 (1st April to 30th June 2023) as submitted to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities
- the Committee's risk register
- efforts to reduce the backlog of planning applications, including a funding application to the Planning Skills Delivery Fund.

Members expressed their appreciation of the Development Management team's efforts to reduce the application backlog. However, concern was expressed regarding the proportion of outstanding cases which were over a year old. The Chief Planning Officer confirmed that the team was aware of the situation and explained the context of some of those cases. She also confirmed that an imminent review of the enforcement service would include the scope for improving website content (e.g. publication of enforcement notices).

RESOLVED – that the Quarter 1 (2023/24) performance indicators and risks for the Planning Policy Committee be noted.

113. QUARTER 1 2023/24 BUDGET MONITORING - PLANNING POLICY COMMITTEE

An analysis of expenditure against the Committee's £1,338K revenue budget for 2023/24, as at the end of June 2023 (Month 3) was presented. A £197K overspend was forecast, mainly due to an increase in the provision for the cost of defending planning appeals; additional expenditure on enforcement and the Gatwick DCO; and a reduction in land charges income.

Regarding the Committee's capital programme (entirely funded by Community Infrastructure Levy income) expenditure of £0.5m was forecast, with the £2.1m carry forward from 2022/23 to be reprofiled into 2024/25.

In response to the debate, the Deputy Chief Executive explained the intention to invest in permanent staff throughout the planning service. However, she reflected on the challenging nature of the recruitment market for certain specialisms and advised that, for the medium term, it would be necessary to retain and seek a few high calibre interim staff within the planning teams.

RESOLVED – that the Committee's forecast revenue and capital budget positions as at Quarter 1 / M3 (June) 2023/24 be noted.

114. BIO-DIVERSITY NET GAIN

The Environment Act 2021 had introduced a minimum requirement for certain types of development to deliver a 10% biodiversity net gain (BNG) through the planning system from November 2023. A report was presented to inform Members about the emerging BNG regime, including the concept of 'mitigation hierarchy' whereby environmental harm arising from a development should be avoided; adequately mitigated; or, as a last resort, compensated for. While BNG mitigation / compensation should, preferably, be achieved on the development site, developers would have the option to fulfil BNG obligations through off-site measures (i.e. on 'receptor sites'). It was confirmed that developers would incur financial penalties if such 'off-site mitigation' took place on receptor sites outside the District. The responsibilities associated with becoming a receptor site were also discussed.

The report explained key aspects of BNG statutory provisions and the implications for the Council, including:

- the Biodiversity Metric (produced by the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA)) to assess changes in biodiversity value brought about by development or changes in land management

- a BNG site register being developed by DEFRA and Natural England
- the requirements for local authorities arising from the introduction of BNG, as identified by the Planning Advisory Service, which would impact on several Council functions, e.g. development management, CIL, corporate policy and legal
- key work areas for embedding BNG within the Council, including short term essential tasks for preparing for the implementation of relevant legislation in November 2023; establishing a baseline biodiversity evidence base over the medium term; and integrating BNG into planning policy and wider corporate strategies
- an explanation of how and when BNG will be applied to planning applications, including a summary of exemptions such as householder applications
- the requirement to monitor relevant schemes over 30 year periods to ensure BNG compliance, including S106 obligations, which would trigger additional workloads for planning, finance and legal services.

Since the original publication of the report, an extra recommendation (E below) had been added which confirmed the Council's aspiration for 20% BNG. Attention was drawn to the need to justify any such increase and to consider any potential impact upon the viability of other developer obligations (e.g., regarding affordable housing and public open space provision).

Discussion focused on the potential financial implications of BNG for the Council and the need to recover costs where possible, including receipt of upfront payments to cover the cost of a 30 year BNG monitoring regime, either upon signing a Section 106 agreement or the commencement of development. It was also confirmed that an ecologist had been recruited to provide in-house capacity for implementing BNG. Arising from this, the scope for working with neighbouring District and Boroughs to share resources and best practice was discussed.

The importance of attempting to map the current ecological status of sites was raised. This would help guard against any unscrupulous attempts to degrade the ecological quality of sites prior to submitting applications (i.e. by establishing evidence of a prior baseline against which BNG requirements would have to be measured).

RESOLVED – that:

- A. Members note the report and the Chief Planning Officer be authorised to undertake the further work necessary to embed BNG within the Local Planning Authority and associated support services;
- B. the basic 10% BNG requirement from November 2023 onwards be adopted until further work can be undertaken to develop a robust evidence base on biodiversity;
- C. Members note the requirement for monitoring BNG statistics, BNG legal agreements and BNG planning conditions and the resourcing implications;
- D. Members note the need to consider staff cost charging schedules for all aspects of BNG related work, particularly administration and monitoring and the intention of the Chief Planning Officer to bring a report back to this Committee on the matter in November 2023; and
- E. the feasibility and achievability of a higher target in Tandridge District than the mandatory 10% BNG be investigated and a further report be submitted to the

Committee's November meeting on the progress of evidence base work relating to the Council adopting such a higher percentage target.

115. GATWICK AIRPORT UPDATE

Gatwick Airport Limited's (GAL) application for an Order to grant Development Consent for its Northern Runway Project had been accepted by the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) to proceed to a public examination. A report was submitted to inform the Committee about the key stages of the examination process, including the significant workstreams for the planning policy team which had now been triggered, i.e.:

- the relevant representations period commenced on 4th September and would run until 29th October
- PINS had issued ten initial observations under Section 51 of the Planning Act 2008, including advice to address the concerns of the local authorities consortium regarding the need for more effective engagement and the preparation of an Issues Tracker (initially, four separate Issues Trackers were provided, however GAL subsequently committed to the production of a consolidated Tracker which would be updated to include future issues raised through relevant representations)
- the full suite of Environmental Statement documents had been released, which enabled public scrutiny of the impacts as identified by GAL (192 documents across 16 thematic areas) – the affected authorities and their consultants were reviewing the documents to consider the assertions made with a view to seeking an appropriate basis of mitigation and/or compensation
- TDC Officers had commenced drafting its Relevant Representation in anticipation of the 29th October due date
- the Council was pursuing bespoke Statements of Common Ground with GAL regarding air quality and noise, with responses on ten other thematic areas deferred to Surrey County Council and/or other adjoining authorities as appropriate
- the Council had agreed to engage with the affected Surrey authorities in the preparation of a joint Local Impact Report, led by Surrey County Council, to be submitted to PINS in advance of the commencement of examination.

In addition, the report explained the work being undertaken by consultants AECOM, York Aviation and Ekosgen to evidence local air quality and noise impacts within the District.

The report also updated the Committee about GAL's FASI-S Airspace Change Programme (the consultation process for which was separate to the DCO) including the options appraisal analysis which indicated that new flight paths will overfly the District and create noise impacts over a wider area. TDC's consultants had been asked to consider this in undertaking their assessment of future cumulative air quality and noise impacts.

RESOLVED – that:

- A. the contents of this report regarding the progress made to date in the DCO process and the current position be noted; and

- B. the contents of the report regarding recent developments in relation to FASI-S be noted.

116. GATWICK AIRPORT DEVELOPMENT CONSENT ORDER (DCO) APPLICATION PROCESS - FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The press and public were excluded from this item in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) on the grounds that:

- (i) the item involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act; and
- (ii) the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

On 23rd March 2023, the Committee approved a £30k budget for Gatwick DCO related work until its next meeting on 22nd June 2023, pending clarification on future expenditure. That budget figure had been supplemented by the provision of two payments from GAL (£9k and £10k) taking the overall budget to approximately £49k. In September 2023, the provision of a further £15k had been agreed by the Chief Executive (under urgency powers) to fund additional technical advice.

The Committee was informed about financial commitments which could be offset against the existing approved spend and the need for an extra £10k to cover specific further work and any other unforeseen contingencies that may occur until the end of the examination period.

RESOLVED – that future expenditure of up to £10,000 in connection with the Gatwick DCO process be approved.

Rising 9.46 pm

Local Plan Options

Planning Policy Committee Thursday, 21 September 2023

Report of: Planning Policy Specialist

Purpose: For decision

Publication status: Open

Wards affected: All

Executive summary:

Following the Local Plan procedural meeting on the 27th July 2023, the Inspector has written to the Council to say that it is his view that it would not be possible to make the plan sound and that he would recommend non-adoption of the Plan. Two options were presented: (1) The Inspector writes a report concluding the Plan is unsound and that it is not adopted; (2) The Council withdraws the Local Plan. This report sets out the implications of each option in order that the Council can make a decision as to the appropriate course of action.

This report supports the Council's priority of: Building a better Council/
Creating the homes, infrastructure and environment we are need/
Supporting economic recovery in Tandridge/
Becoming a greener, more sustainable District

Contact officer Katya Fox Planning Policy Specialist
kfox@tandridge.gov.uk

Recommendation to Committee:

- A. That the Committee consider the pros, cons and risks of each of the two options for the emerging Local Plan, i.e. to request an Inspector's Report (option 1) or withdraw the emerging Local Plan (option 2); and
 - B. The Committee make a recommendation to Full Council on which option should be pursued by the Council.
-

Reason for recommendation:

The Inspector has requested that a decision be made regarding the future way forward on the Local Plan by the end of September. As a significant decision for the future of the District, the Committee is being asked to take the decision to Full Council.

Introduction and background

- 1 The Council submitted its emerging Local Plan 2033 for examination by PINS in January 2019. Following examination hearings, the Planning Inspector wrote to the council in December 2020 (ID16), expressing concerns about his ability to find the Local Plan sound, based on several issues:
 - a. Capacity and safety at Junction 6 of the M25 and the implications this could have on the spatial strategy
 - b. Objectively Assessed Housing Needs
 - c. Housing Land Supply
 - d. School Places Forecasting
 - e. Gypsy, Travelling and Showpeople Accommodation Need
 - f. Site Allocations
 - g. Development Management Policies
- 2 The Council sought to resolve these issues and engaged with the Inspector throughout the process.
- 3 In June 2023, the Inspector wrote to the Council, asking for a procedural meeting to be held. The meeting's aim was to cover a way forward for resolving the soundness issues and adopting the Local Plan.
- 4 The procedural meeting was held on the 27th July 2023. Following the procedural meeting, the Inspector wrote to the Council (ID26) concluding that the Council's suggested way forward (TED-61) would only serve to protract the examination further and raise further procedural concerns. On that basis, the Inspector stated that it would not be possible to make the plan sound and that he would recommend non-adoption of the Plan. The letter set out two options:
 - a. Inspector writes a report of the examination concluding the Plan is unsound and that it is not adopted.
 - b. The Council withdraws the Plan prior to the Inspector making any such recommendations.
- 5 The Inspector requested that the Council should advise how it wishes to proceed by the end of September 2023, or if it is unable to respond by this date, advise when it will be in a position to respond.
- 6 This report sets out the implications of each option for consideration.

Appendix A

Option 1: Inspectors Report

- 7 Under this option, the Inspector will prepare a full report on the emerging Local Plan. In his letter, the Inspector stated that the report will focus on the reasons why it is unsound following the format set out in the Procedure Guide for Local Plan Examinations.

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/examining-local-plans-procedural-practice/procedure-guide-for-local-plan-examinations#section-7-the-inspectors-report>

- 8 The Procedure Guide states that the report will present conclusions, backed by reasoned judgements on soundness and legal compliance of the plan. The Guide further states that:

'The focus on soundness and legal compliance means that, as far as possible, the Inspector's report will avoid summarising the cases of individual parties, referring to specific representations and representors, or describing what was said at hearing sessions. The report will not respond to every point or issue raised by those objecting to the plan, or refer to every policy and site allocation. Instead, it will explain concisely why the Inspector has arrived at his or her conclusions and recommendations.'

- 9 **Inspector's Report:** Since the conclusion of the initial hearings in 2019, a substantial amount of correspondence has been exchanged with the Inspector regarding the soundness of the Local Plan. If the report was prepared it will provide a consolidated summary of all of the soundness issues raised. This should provide a useful single reference resource to identify key lessons learnt and issues for a new Local Plan.
- 10 Without the report, decisionmakers and the development industry will be forced to rely on a series of historic documents on the examination website where the information may be buried and direction is not especially clear.
- 11 A fuller understanding of the reasons why the plan will be found unsound may assist with future plan making and decision-taking for a few years. However, it should be noted that the weight accorded to the Inspector's report will be challenged by various parties according to whether or not it supports their position. As such, it is likely to be a matter that is initially contested through the appeal process.
- 12 It will also be an easier document for the local community to access and will help them to clearly understand why the plan was unable to proceed.
- 13 However, it is important to remember that the contents of the Inspector's report will be final. In the event the Council does not agree with them or with how the Inspector has summarised the situation, there will be no opportunity for the Council to either respond or to engage further with the Inspector.

Appendix A

- 14 **Costs:** It will be necessary to pay the Inspector for the preparation of his report. The current fees for the Inspector are £933 per day. It is estimated that the report is likely to take at least two weeks to prepare, which will result in a minimum cost of £9,330 for the council. Additional costs for the programme officer's time will also be incurred for that time period. A total cost of £12,000 is estimated to be associated with this option. This will be in addition to the outstanding costs of the Inspector's and Programme Officer's time. No other costs are associated with this option.
- 15 **Evidence Base:** The emerging Local Plan examination will not technically be concluded until the Inspector sends his final report to the council. Any documents published on the examination website will remain public and could be of use for other matters than the Local Plan until such time as the emerging Local Plan is formally withdrawn.
- 16 Once the report is received, should the council wish to retain and publish any of the existing evidence base for a new Local Plan on its website, it will need to be approved for publication individually through the standard corporate processes. This process will create the opportunity to review and update evidence base studies to align with best practice in terms of approach and reflect recent changes, for example, relating to local circumstances with respect to infrastructure requirements.
- 17 Given the likely minimal weight afforded to the Inspector's report in decision making, it will therefore be necessary to undertake further work and produce new evidence base studies in relation to identified issues to inform future planning decisions and appeals. As the Inspector's report will clearly identify soundness issues, there will be a clear steer for the scope of works for these new studies.
- 18 **Work planning:** It is unknown how long the Inspector will take to issue the report, but an initial estimate suggests that it would be no earlier than December 2023. This option offers space for reflection and work planning leading up to, and following, the receipt of the report.
- 19 Timing-wise, when the Inspector's report is received there may be more certainty about political direction at national level and more clarity regarding proposed changes to the planning system (including transition arrangements). In reality it is unlikely that Local Plan preparation could commence until 2024 at the earliest.

Option 2: Council Withdraws the Local Plan

- 20 Under this option, the Council would make a decision to withdraw the emerging Local Plan and no further work on the Examination would be undertaken by the Inspector. The Council would not receive an Inspector's Report. Most councils withdraw their plans when the Inspector has indicated that the plan cannot be made sound. Withdrawal may also leave more options open to the Council regarding future direction for a Local Plan because there is no definitive Inspector's report.

Appendix A

- 21 **Inspector's Report:** Although the Council will not receive an Inspector's report, it will still be possible to identify key lessons learnt and issues to address for a new local plan. However, these will need to be compiled / inferred by officers from the correspondence exchanged with the Inspector. There will not be a single consolidated document for stakeholders to reference. There will also be less clarity for the community as to why the Local Plan cannot proceed.
- 22 **Costs:** No costs will be incurred from the Inspector writing his report and associated Programme Officer work. This could be a saving of £12,000.
- 23 **Evidence base:** If the emerging Local Plan is withdrawn, the examination will have effectively ended. Therefore, the examination website, including the emerging Local Plan and supporting evidence base, will need to be immediately removed in line with regulations. Should the council wish to retain and publish any of the existing evidence base for a new Local Plan on its website, it will need to be approved for publication individually through the standard corporate processes.
- 24 This process will create the opportunity to review and update evidence base studies to align with best practice in terms of approach and reflect recent changes, for example, relating to local circumstances with respect to infrastructure requirements.
- 25 As for option 1, it will be necessary to undertake further work and produce new evidence base studies in relation to identified soundness issues to inform future planning decisions and appeals. Without an Inspector's report, it will be for officers to infer the key issues to be addressed in the scope of works for these new evidence base studies.
- 26 **Work planning:** A formal decision to withdraw the emerging Local Plan will provide a level of certainty and clarity for the local community, developers and other stakeholders regarding the planning policy framework for development and growth in Tandridge. For decision taking and plan making purposes, including neighbourhood planning, it will be clear that at the local level reference should be to the adopted Local Plan.
- 27 However, without an Inspector's report there will be less clarity regarding key issues identified through the Examination and their future consideration with respect to future growth in Tandridge in general or in relation to specific sites.
- 28 Work could immediately begin on a new Local Plan although in reality this is likely to be unable to commence until there is more certainty about political direction at national level and the proposed changes to the planning system (including transition arrangements). It is unlikely that Local Plan preparation could commence until 2024 at the earliest.

Appendix A

Summary

29 The table below summarises the pros and cons of the two options.

Option 1 – Inspector’s Report

Theme	Pros	Cons
Inspector’s report	Consolidated summary of issues – single reference source	Weight accorded to report likely to be challenged at appeal
	Fuller understanding of soundness issues to inform future plan making and decision taking	
	Community will be able to better understand why the plan cannot progress	
Costs		Estimated cost of £12,000 for Inspector’s and Programme Officer’s time
Evidence base	Report will provide clear steer for scope of works for additional evidence base studies to address soundness issues	Existing evidence base will be extant until report is issued, short-term delay to opportunity to review and update evidence base studies
Work planning	Convenience of Inspector’s report - will be helpful to decision takers and plan makers in the long-term	
	Report will provide clear steer on the issues that will need to be address through a new Local Plan – useful for future work planning	

Appendix A

Theme	Pros	Cons
	Time / space for reflection and work planning for new Local Plan while awaiting the Inspector's report	
	May be greater clarity at proposed changes to the planning system (including transition arrangements) later this year. If this aligns with receipt of report, it will allow for more efficient work planning	

Option 2 – Council Withdraws the Local Plan

Theme	Pros	Cons
Inspector's report	Lack of consolidated summary – single reference source	Officers will have to spend additional time compiling / inferring soundness issues
		Lesser understanding of soundness issues to inform future plan making
		Community will be less able to understand why the plan cannot progress
Costs	No costs will be incurred from the Inspector, representing a saving of £12,000	
Evidence base	Immediate opportunity to review and update evidence base studies	Less clarity re scope of works for additional evidence base studies to address soundness issues

Appendix A

Theme	Pros	Cons
Work planning	Immediate clarity for developers, neighbouring authorities and stakeholders regarding the local policy framework	Less clarity for plan makers and decision takers regarding key issues for future growth and potential sites
	Work on a new Local Plan could begin immediately (albeit that potential reform may delay the start in practice)	Less clarity on previous soundness issues to inform future work planning on a new Local Plan
		Less clarity on the proposed changes to the planning system (including transition arrangements) at the outset of the work planning period

Key implications

Comments of the Chief Finance Officer

The financial implications of each option are set out in the body of the report. In the event that the Inspector's Report option is chosen, the costs would be met from the existing budget for the Local Plan. Future spending on Planning Policy matters will need to be reviewed alongside the emerging budget for 2024/25 and the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Comments of the Head of Legal Services

In reaching a decision in this matter, it is important that Members are content that they have identified and evaluated the full range of likely impacts of each available option, associated cost implications and identified and carefully considered all of the relevant factors. In arriving at a decision Members must believe that it is in the best interests for the District.

Equality

There are no equality impacts associated with this report.

Appendix A

Climate change

There are no significant environmental / sustainability implications associated with this report.

Appendices

None

Background papers

None

----- end of report -----

This page is intentionally left blank

TANDRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

AUDIT & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Minutes and report to Council of the meeting of the Committee held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices on the 26 September 2023 at 7:30pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Booth (Chair), Chotai, Cooper, Sue Farr, Patel, Nicholas White, Black (Substitute) (In place of Colin White), Hammond (Substitute) (In place of Sharp) and Pursehouse (Substitute) (In place of Allen)

PRESENT (Virtually): Councillors North

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors Allen, Sharp and Colin White

117. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON 27 JUNE 2023

The minutes were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

118. EXTERNAL AUDIT 2021/22 – AUDIT UPDATE

The Committee received a report relating to the progress of the external audit of the 2021/22 statement of accounts and the agreeing of audit fees.

In respect of audit fees, Members were informed that:

- PSAA had contacted the Council to arrange a meeting to discuss the Councils' challenge to the proposed external audit fees of £345,000 for the 2019/20 and 2020/21 audits.
- an initial cost estimate of £151,000 had been received for the 2021/22 audit fees, which had since been revised by Deloitte to £66,000. The revised amount was still to be agreed. The Council had currently only agreed to pay the scale fee of £36,000. Any costs above this amount would be referred back to the Committee.
- the Council was expecting a significant increase in the scale fees for 2023/24. Officers had estimated the increase to be approximately £90,000 but formal confirmation had yet to be received.

In respect of the audit of the 2021/22 statement of accounts, Members were informed that:

- the audit had started in July following a delay due to fee discussions. A project plan had been drawn up with the aim of completing the audit by the end of October 2023. However, there was a significant risk that this deadline would slip due to competing priorities which had delayed the provision of information for audit testing to the external auditors. The Council was working closely with Deloitte to provide this information and complete the audit as soon as possible. Early work on the 2022/23 audit was also being considered where possible to save time in the future.
- Officers were conscious that a new firm of auditors will be appointed from 2023/24. Therefore all remaining audits needed to be completed as a priority.

- the 2021/22 draft statement of accounts had been published on the Council's website and were open to public inspection for 30 working days.

In response to Member questions, Officers explained that:

- the audit scale fee applicable to the Council was £36,000. Deloitte had proposed a combined scale fee for 2019/20 and 2020/21 of £345,000. Consequently, the Council was challenging the proposed scale fee. Any future developments with the proposed fees would be brought back to Committee.
- the cost of the 2021/22 audit to Deloitte was estimated at £151,000. However, the revised fee of £66,000 could be achieved if there were no delays with the audit and information supplied to Deloitte on time.
- it was possible for Deloitte to provide information in respect of hours worked to date which would allow the Committee to compare the incurred cost against any agreed scale fee. PSAA guidance states that auditors should raise proposed fee variations at the earliest opportunity.

RESOLVED – that the Committee:

- A. notes the 2021/22 external audit progress.
- B. notes the publication of the 2021/22 statement of accounts on the Council's website and the start of the public inspection period.
- C. notes progress on addressing audit fee proposals.

119. INTERNAL AUDIT 2022/23 PROGRESS REPORT – AUGUST 2023

The Committee received a progress report from the Southern Internal Audit Partnership (SIAP) which included:

- an analysis of live audit reviews that still had management actions pending or overdue.
- a progress update against the 2022/23 and 2023/24 Internal Audit Plan.
- a summary of any adjustments to the Internal Audit Plan and any significant issues that would impact on the Chief Internal Auditor's annual opinion.

SIAP informed Members that:

- the 2022/23 audit was almost completed with the last two reviews nearing completion. All other reviews for the year had been completed.
- progress was being made in the 2023/24 audit. SIAP had been liaising with key contacts in the Council to progress the quarter 3 audits.

In response to Member questions, it was confirmed that:

- the executive summaries contained in the report were draft but had been confirmed by Officers as factually accurate and all field work had been completed. The management

actions were marked as 'TBC' as Officers were preparing a management response to address SIAP's observations, having received the reports recently. The next progress report will include the agreed management actions to be taken which will then be monitored to completion by SIAP. Including the draft executive summaries at this stage allowed them to be included in the completed Annual Report and Opinion, which could not have been produced without them.

- the length of time for Officers to respond to a SIAP report with management actions varies depending on SIAP's findings. Officers need to spend the appropriate amount of time completing their response to avoid proposing unrealistic management actions with unachievable target dates. All outstanding management actions were being given the required level of attention from Officers despite pressures on internal resources and capacity.
- the level of audit work required by all Councils was concerning, particularly in relation to external audit. Local Authorities are lobbying CIPFA and the Financial Reporting Council to simplify the format of the statement of accounts and the associated external audit requirements.

RESOLVED – that the Committee notes the Internal Audit Progress Report – August 2023.

120. INTERNAL AUDIT ANNUAL REPORT AND OPINION 2022/23

Neil Pitman of the Southern Internal Audit Partnership ("SIAP") presented a report that set out the Chief Internal Auditor's opinion on the adequacy and effectiveness of the Council's framework of risk management, internal control and governance for the financial year 2022/23.

It was noted that 50% of all assurance opinions had received a 'Limited' assurance, 42% had received a 'Reasonable' assurance and 8% had received a 'Substantial' assurance. Consequently, the Council's overall assurance opinion had been considered to be 'Limited'.

Despite the last three annual internal audit opinions being limited, it was noted that the Council's position had continued to improve, year on year improvement was evident and the ratio of more favourable assurance opinions had increased. It was noted that Officers were using internal audit maturely and were focusing on genuine areas of importance and concern.

Officers informed Members that:

- the Council was currently having difficulties with monthly bank reconciliation due to an outdated income management system. Officers were in the process of resolving this issue by updating to the latest version of the income management system and establishing a solid reconciliation starting point. It was noted that there had been no material difference between the Council's financial system and bank accounts in recent audits and external audit had been satisfied with this approach.
- improvements were being prioritised and improvements had already been made in the accounts payable and accounts receivable systems which had both received reasonable assurance opinions, which were improved from previous years.

RESOLVED – that the Committee notes the Internal Audit Annual Report & Opinion 2022/23.

121. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S DRAFT ANNUAL GOVERNANCE STATEMENT 2022/23

The Head of Legal presented a report on the Council's updated draft Annual Governance Statement ("AGS") for 2022/23. Councillors were asked to consider and make comments on the draft document which would then be incorporated and finalised for approval at the next committee meeting in November. Once finalised, the AGS would be published alongside the statement of accounts for 2022/23.

Members were provided with a summary of the comments made by SIAP on the AGS in their audit report and Annual Report and Opinion. These comments had been incorporated where possible. It was noted that a review of the AGS had also been completed by senior management.

In response to Member questions it was confirmed that:

- the Council has a strategy in place which will look to take advantage of IT developments and provide more cost effective, reliable and resilient solutions where possible.
- the Council's IT disaster recovery solution is in place and data was being replicated on a continual basis between the main Council Offices and the Warren Lane depot.
- the information provided in the AGS in respect of the work completed by the Planning Department in 2022/23 would be amended to show the number of open cases carried over from previous years.

RESOLVED – that the Committee note the contents of the report and comments on the draft Annual Governance Statement 2022-23 be noted.

122. REVIEW OF THE COUNCIL'S LOCAL CODE OF CORPORATE GOVERNANCE

The Head of Legal presented a report setting out the outcome of the annual review of the Council's Local Code of Corporate Governance. Members were informed that the details in the report feeds into the review of the effectiveness of the Council's system of internal control and contributes to the AGS.

In response to Member questions, it was confirmed that an updated briefing paper had been published about the Council's response to climate change in July 2023. In addition, a new post had been recruited to in the Policy and Communications Team and part of their remit was to progress the Council's agenda in this area. It was noted that there was an intention to bring an updated climate change paper to the Strategy & Resources Committee in early 2024.

RESOLVED – that the Committee approve the Local Code of Corporate Governance 2023/24.

123. REVIEW OF THE ANTI-FRAUD, BRIBERY AND CORRUPTION POLICY AND ANTI-FRAUD STRATEGY STATEMENT

The Head of Legal presented a report setting out a review of the Council's Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy and the Anti-Fraud Strategy Statement. Members were informed of the

steps being taken by the Council to embed and strengthen an anti-fraud culture amongst Officers.

In response to Member questions, it was confirmed that:

- the Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy would be amended to include reference to the process for dealing with anonymous complaints.
- a joint working agreement had been entered into with Reigate & Banstead Borough Council who are currently in the process of providing fraud training to key teams within the Council.
- internal governance processes had also been strengthened which had recently prevented a fraud attempt.
- the publication of policies on the Council's website was currently being reviewed.

RESOLVED – that:

- A. the updated Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy is reviewed and the Committee provided recommendations it wished to make to ensure its effectiveness.
- B. the updated Anti-Fraud Strategy Statement is reviewed and the Committee determined recommendations it wishes to make to ensure its effectiveness.

COUNCIL DECISION
(subject to ratification by Council)

RECOMMENDED – that:

- C. the updated Anti-Fraud, Bribery and Corruption Policy, subject to amendments to be made by the Head of Legal in conjunction with the Section 151 Officer, is approved by the Committee and recommended for adoption.
- D. the updated Anti-Fraud Strategy Statement is approved by the Committee and recommended for adoption by Full Council.

124. FUTURE TANDRIDGE PROGRAMME UPDATE – AUGUST 2023

The Section 151 Officer presented a report focusing on the governance, risk and issue management of the Future Tandridge Programme.

Members were informed that:

- the internal audit process had provided a substantial assurance in respect of the delivery of the 2022/23 savings plan. The audit is planned to be repeated in the 2023/24 audit.
- the report highlighted one red risk with a high mitigated score which related to the organisational development workstream. The risk remained high due to difficulties in recruiting an appropriate resource to lead the workstream and this had remained unchanged from previous reports despite further recruitment attempts. Discussions

were ongoing with Reigate & Banstead Borough Council to see if support can be provided from their ongoing change programme.

- new risks had been added to the FTP Risk Register in respect of:
 - the progress of works in the digital transformation workstream;
 - the building of knowledge articles;
 - the progress of the GM options appraisal.
 - the savings plan for 2024/25.

Mitigating actions were either in place or being planned to manage the new risks.

- in respect of the delivery of savings for the current financial year, over a million pounds of the target was either already delivered or RAG rated green and a further five hundred thousand was RAG rated amber.

In response to Member questions, it was confirmed that:

- the total savings requirement for 2023/24 was £1.654m. In order to deliver these savings, the Strategy & Resources Committee approved two phases of costs. The first phase totalled £250k to develop and design the programme. The second phase was a £500k one-off investment to deliver the programme, including permanent savings of £1.7m each year.
- in respect of the GM options appraisal risk, the next step in the process was to quantify and establish the risks and mitigations in implementing the proposed solution and making sure it works correctly to deliver the service.
- one of the aims of the digital project is to make contacting the Council as efficient as possible for residents and includes the replacement of the telephony system. It was not the intention to close any channels of communication to the Council but to provide residents with options to resolve their queries via their preferred method.
- the Council had been reporting to the Strategy & Resources Committee regarding the work backlog in the Council Tax team. It was acknowledged that there was a problem with this service and steps to make improvements were being taken.

RESOLVED – that the Committee

- A. note the direction of travel for the FTP and the savings identified for delivery in 2023/24.
- B. note the approach to risk management being applied and the current programme level risks identified.

125. QUARTER 1 PERFORMANCE EXCEPTIONS

The Head of Policy and Communications presented a report that provided a performance and risk exception update for the Council's four policy committees. It was noted that performance was good, but that three red risks had been identified in respect of the local plan, the council housebuilding programme and ash dieback.

In response to comments on the report, a request was made to Councillors that they should advise residents to make complaints directly to the Council if they are not satisfied with the service so they can be responded to.

RESOLVED – that the Committee review and note the policy committees' performance exceptions for Quarter 1 2022-2023 and the committee and corporate risks.

126. COMPLAINTS AND FREEDOM OF INFORMATION UPDATE

The Committee received a report which summarised the Council's complaints policy and presented breakdowns of the 21 Stage 1 complaints and 6 Stage 2 complaints received in the quarter from April 2023 to June 2023. In response to a Councillor query, Officers agreed to consider whether information on complaints could be provided on a ward-by-ward basis.

The report also included information from the annual letter from the Local Government Ombudsman which covered the period of April 2022 to 31 March 2023. The letter included a request from the Ombudsman that the Council should aim to consistently meet its response target over the next year.

The report also provided a breakdown of the 209 Freedom of Information (FOI) requests received in the same quarter which represented an increase from the previous quarter. The Council was attempting to address the increase in the number of FOIs and the time spent processing them by publishing information consistently on its website and signposting when possible. It was noted that despite this work, FOIs remained a resourcing concern.

RESOLVED – that the report be accepted and noted.

127. RESIDENTS' SURVEY 2023

The Head of Policy and Communications presented a report setting out the findings of a residents' survey carried out in June and July 2023. The survey aimed to find out what residents thought about the services the Council provides, how well the Council communicates with them and their knowledge and experience with digital tools and channels.

Members were informed that:

- 2,500 randomly selected households received postal questionnaires.
- the response rate was 30%.
- there was a 95% confidence rate that the findings were statistically accurate.
- there had been no significant change since the last survey in 2021.
- 41% agreed that the Council provided good value for money which was an improvement from 2021.
- results would be used alongside other data to inform the new corporate plan and digital transformation programme.

In response to Member questions, it was confirmed that each survey was sent to a household and therefore the owners/parents of the household tended to respond to the survey which may have affected the survey demographics.

RESOLVED – that the committee notes and accepts the report, as well as the survey findings.

Rising 9.33 pm

TANDRIDGE DISTRICT COUNCIL

STRATEGY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

Minutes and report to Council of the meeting of the Committee held in the Council Chamber - Council Offices on the 28 September 2023 at 7:30pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Langton (Chair), Crane (Vice-Chair), Black, Bloore, Botten, Cooper, Damesick, Gray, Hammond, Anna Jones (Substitute) (In place of Alun Jones), Pursehouse and Sayer

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Chris Farr, Sue Farr and Nicholas White

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillor Alun Jones

128. MINUTES OF THE MEETING HELD ON THE 29TH JUNE 2023

These minutes were confirmed and signed as a correct record.

129. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Pursehouse and Bloore declared non-pecuniary interests in agenda item 9 (Review of policy for granting rental subsidies to community organisations utilising Council owned land – Minute 134). This was on the basis of their connections with once such organisation, i.e. the Blanchman's Farm Nature Reserve Committee, of which Councillor Pursehouse was Chairman, and Councillor Bloore was the Council's representative.

130. QUARTER 1 2023/24 BUDGET MONITORING - STRATEGY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

An analysis of forecast expenditure against the Council's overall revenue budget of £11,935K as at the end of June 2023 (Month 3) was presented. When the budget was set in February 2023, £230K was held in 'corporate items' pending a staff pay award. Given that a pay award for 2023/24 had since been approved, a proposed virement of the £230K to the four policy committee budgets was recommended.

A £250K revenue overspend was forecast, split between the policy committees as follows:

- Housing (General Fund): £15K
- Planning Policy: £197K
- Strategy & Resources: £38K

While contingencies totalling £921K meant that a balanced outturn was still expected, the report emphasised the need for mitigating actions to continue, especially in light of unquantified risks such as planning appeal costs and the impact of financial pressures on existing suppliers. This message was reinforced by Members during the debate.

It was confirmed that the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities (DLUHC) had declined the Council's request to use £500K of capital receipts from the sale of Redstone House as part of a strategy to build General Fund reserves. DLUHC had cited the Council's improved financial position as the reason for refusal. However, Officers would maintain contact with DLUHC officials to keep them apprised of the Council's financial situation. The Committee expressed disappointment at DLUHC's decision but was pleased that the Council's efforts to manage its budget pressures had been recognised. The Chief Finance Officer explained the alternative options for utilising the £500K, predominantly avoiding borrowing to improve planned debt repayment costs.

The report confirmed that the capital programme was forecasting £8,827K of net slippage and a £36K underspend. A breakdown of the total slippage (into 2024/25) by committee was provided. This followed a phasing review to identify how much was deliverable in 2023/24. A quarter 1 update regarding 'actuals' against the Council's prudential indicators for 2023/24 was also submitted. This reflected a new requirement (of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's Prudential and Treasury Management Codes) that such monitoring be reported quarterly. The Investment Sub-Committee would have otherwise received Prudential Indicator updates but was not scheduled to meet until November, by which time the quarter 1 update would be superseded.

Various other matters were discussed in response to the report, including:

- the risks and uncertainties associated with the impact of cost inflation upon key construction contracts, including reference to measures taken to increase resilience for the Council house building programme
- the rationale for recharging legal services costs to other departments where appropriate
- the basis for doubling the 2022/23 provision for planning appeal costs (by £132k for 2023/24)
- appreciation of the contributions made by the finance team and others to the effective management of the Council's finances, despite the significant challenges facing the Council and the wider Local Government sector.

R E S O L V E D – that:

- A. it be noted that the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities has refused the Council's application to use capital receipts as part of a strategy to build reserves resilience;
- B. the forecast revenue and capital budgets positions as at Quarter 1 / M3 (June) 2023 and the Q1 Prudential Indicator update be noted;
- C. a pay award virement of £231K between corporate items and the Strategy & Resources, Community Services, Housing and Planning Policy Committees, as set out in section 3 of the report, be approved; and
- D. the reprofiling of the capital budget set out in section 21 and Appendix A of the report be approved.

131. QUARTER 1 2023/24 KEY PERFORMANCE INDICATORS - STRATEGY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE

An analysis of performance against the Committee's key indicators for the first quarter (April to June 2023) for 2023/24 was presented along with 'committee' and 'corporate' risk registers. Particular attention was drawn to indicators SR5 and SR7 which the report deemed the most likely to impact on the Council's performance:

- *“SR5: The number of working days / shifts lost due to sickness absence (long and short-term) is off target by 2.46 days. This is an improvement since the last quarter. The target is 7.1 days. The overall trend is down, for the same quarter last year sickness absence was 11.36%.”*

Discussion included the breakdown of the types of sickness (e.g. that musculoskeletal conditions were not necessarily attributable to the working environment) and that the target may need to be reassessed in light of national trends.

- *“SR7: Staff turnover is just off target at 15.9%, compared to 14.5% in the last quarter. The target is 15%. The overall trend is down, for the same quarter last year turnover was 17.6%.”*

The fact that 44% of leavers didn't give a specific reason for their departures during exit interviews was questioned. It was confirmed that such interviews were not conducted by line managers. The intention to focus efforts on recruiting permanent staff to the development management and planning policy teams was discussed.

Members asserted that indicator SR10 (% of calls answered within 60 seconds by Customer Services: 44.03% for Q1 against a target of 80%) also impacted upon performance, especially in light of the target never being achieved and the fact that 88% of responders to the recent residents' survey *“usually contact the Council by phone”*. The Chief Executive confirmed the need to address the matter, including via benchmarking against other authorities and a detailed analysis of why the target is being missed and if / how it could eventually be met. The intention for longer term solutions to be delivered via the digital transformation programme in respect of SR10 was acknowledged.

Discussion also focused on item S8 (delivery of the One Public Estate programme) within the Committee's risk register. A range of views were expressed, most of which supported the Council's ongoing participation.

RESOLVED – that the most critical Quarter 1 2023-2024 performance indicators and corporate risks be noted.

ACTION:

Action	Responsible Person	Deadline
<p>Detailed analysis to be undertaken and circulated to S&R Committee members regarding KPI SR10, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • why performance is consistently off-target • identification of average call waiting times • other relevant contextual information • whether the target is realistic (informed by benchmarking against other Councils) and, if so, what measures are likely to be necessary to achieve the target, including whether staffing resources could be allocated more flexibly to cover periods of peak demand. 	David Ford	

132. FUTURE TANDRIDGE PROGRAMME UPDATE

A report was submitted which included:

- (i) progress to date in delivering the service reviews, with RAG risk ratings for achieving the £1.7m savings target (all necessary actions had now been taken to deliver savings of £856K; further potential savings of £192K were marked as green; £546K as amber; with £26K for Regulatory Services now considered to be unachievable)
- (ii) an update on the senior management restructure, including a recent decision to review staffing requirements for the planning policy and development management teams
- (iii) an update on the Grounds Maintenance options appraisal process as previously provided to the Community Services and Housing Committees (i.e. pursuit of a hybrid approach with a combination of in-house and outsourced work based on contract lot structures)
- (iv) a progress update for digital transformation (including the procurement of Salesforce licences; Project Initiation Document sign off; appointments of an implementation partner / telephony provider; and provision of a resource for redesigning the website)
- (v) a progress update on the activities underway in Revenues & Benefits (including a shared service approach with Reigate & Banstead Borough Council and internal measures to improve performance and efficiency and to reduce the backlog of cases)
- (vi) financial context – an update on the approach to the 2024/25 budget process and planning of 2024/25 savings.

The Chief Executive updated the Committee regarding the emerging senior management restructure; progress towards the formulation of a new corporate plan; the review of the staff appraisal system and development of a 'one team' ethos; and the intention to apply the principles of the Grounds Maintenance options appraisal process across other business areas as part of the new commissioning model.

The Chief Finance Officer commented further on (iv) to (vi) above, including reference to the Member briefing about the 2024/25 draft budget on 31st October and an explanation of the initial £90K being sought to cover 12 months of programme management to support the next phase of organisational change. The remainder of the transformation resource would be subject to further justification to the Committee as and when required.

The following matters were raised by Members during the debate:

- compliments for way in which the Grounds Maintenance options appraisal process had been handled
- the need to identify realistic budget / savings plans for 2025/26 and 2026/27 if possible, in light of potential Local Government finance settlements and other factors (it was confirmed that estimated saving requirements up to 2026/27 for different scenarios were due to be included in the budget report to the Committee's next meeting)
- the need to pursue commercial opportunities for generating additional income
- whether the amber risk rating for delivering the objectives of the 'customer services' service review should be upgraded (the Chief Finance Officer agreed to reassess the current RAG rating as part of a review of the customer service team's staffing requirements)
- the importance of retaining the 'wellbeing prescription' and 'domestic violence prevention (IRIS)' programmes.

RESOLVED – that:

In respect of the wider Future Tandridge Programme (FTP):

1. the progress being made on the FTP be noted
2. the progress in delivering the service reviews and 2023/24 savings be noted
3. the progress made on Revenues & Benefits shared service planning be noted

In respect of the 2024/25 budget process and FTP resourcing:

4. the progress being made on the approach to developing the 2024/25 savings plan be noted
5. the forecast against the FTP delivery budget be noted
6. the £90k initial resources required to develop the 2024/25 savings plan and organisational change required over the medium-term, as set out in section 8.1 of the report, be approved.

ACTION:

Action	Responsible Person	Deadline
The risk rating for delivering the objectives of the 'customer services' service review (currently amber) be reassessed.	Mark Hak-Sanders	For the Q2 update to Committee – 30/11/2023

133. HOUSEHOLD SUPPORT GRANT - PHASE 4

The Government had launched a fourth phase of the Household Support Fund to provide financial support to vulnerable households. Whereas previous allocations had spanned six months over a summer or winter period, Phase 4 covered the whole of 2023/24, with Councils having discretion about when to release the funding. As with previous phases, initial allocations had been made to Unitaries and Counties. Surrey County Council had distributed £3.8m of its £10.6m allocation to Boroughs and Districts (a reduced share compared to previous years) £316K of which had been distributed to TDC to meet local requirements.

A report on the Phase 4 Tandridge scheme was submitted regarding decisions taken to date and the plans for the winter months. Following consultation with Group Leaders, it had been agreed to run the scheme in two rounds:

- Round 1 was launched on 18th September, following advertisements on-line and in the CR3 magazine and its sister publications. This round had since been suspended as the applications to date would fully utilise the £105K provision (one-third of TDC's allocation) if approved.
- Round 2 to be launched on 11th December using multiple advertising channels, to run until the remaining £211K is fully utilised.

Officers were liaising with community groups, such as CAB and the Westway, to raise awareness of the scheme. The existing eligibility framework would be used again for administering Phase 4.

The following changes to the Tandridge scheme compared to previous phases were highlighted:

- provision to allow funding to be distributed through other organisations, i.e. charity, voluntary or third sector groups should they meet the aims and audit requirements of the programme (decisions on funding such groups will be taken by the Chief Finance Officer in consultation with Group Leaders and will likely be an option if the budget is not fully utilised via direct applications)
- increase in grants from £100 to £150 for households without children and from £300 to £350 for households with children, to recognise the impact of inflation since the first phase was launched.

The report also advised that the costs of running all four phases of the scheme will fully be covered by a proportionate administrative deduction.

During the debate, the Chief Finance Officer was asked if it would be possible to provide information regarding the number of successful applications for Tandridge Household Support funding to date. The CFO was also asked to ensure that Parish Councils were aware of the scheme.

RESOLVED – that:

- A. the launch (on 18th September 2023) of the first round of Household Support Grant (Phase 4) be noted; and
- B. the launch of the second round of Household Support Grant (Phase 4) be approved.

ACTIONS:

Action	Responsible Person	Deadline
Data be circulated to S&R Committee members regarding the number of successful applications for Tandridge Household Support funding to date.	Mark Hak-Sanders	13/10/2023
Ensure that Parish Councils are engaged on the HSF scheme	Mark Hak-Sanders	31/10/2023 – in preparation for round 2

134. REVIEW OF POLICY FOR GRANTING RENTAL SUBSIDIES TO COMMUNITY ORGANISATIONS

In accordance with a decision at the previous meeting, officers had reviewed the policy for awarding rental subsidies to community organisations leasing Council owned assets. The review had concluded that, while the original framework for assessing subsidy applications was still largely satisfactory, the following clause represented an unreasonable risk for community groups and should be removed:

“In normal circumstances, any rent subsidy grant awarded should be tapered in order to encourage organisations to become more self-sufficient, with rent review periods generally set between 6-9 years”

It was recommended that the rental burden be removed entirely in lieu of full repairs and maintenance obligations being placed upon tenants, to be reflected within the terms of ten-year leases to future successful applicants. The report also proposed that tenants wishing to redevelop community premises be assisted with longer periods of tenure to help facilitate funding applications. Notwithstanding this, the Committee considered that the new policy should reflect the longer-term horizons of local nature reserves by guaranteeing 25-year lease periods. Councillor Bloore, seconded by Councillor Hammond, moved an additional recommendation to that effect. Upon being put to the vote, the amendment was carried.

Members were also invited to consider whether it was still appropriate for the Committee to retain its current role for determining rent subsidy applications. Councillor Pursehouse, seconded by Councillor Bloore, proposed that authority be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer (CFO), in consultation with the Community Grants Working Group, to determine future applications, with the Committee's involvement being limited to applications referred by the CFO in exceptional circumstances. Upon being put to the vote, the motion was carried.

RESOLVED – that:

- A. all future rental grants to be at 100% subsidy, with the following conditions:
- the tenant is to take over full responsibility for repairs, maintenance and insurance cost at the property, including sports pitches and grounds
 - for nature reserves leasing Council owned land, lease terms of 25 years will be provided
 - for other organisations, lease terms of 10 years will be provided (outside the security of tenure provisions of the Landlord & Tenant Act 1954) but where the tenant wishes to redevelop the property, and the funding source requires a longer lease, then the lease length will be extended in accordance with funding requirements; and
- B. authority be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer, in consultation with the Community Grants Working Group, to determine future applications in accordance with the new policy, with the Chief Finance Officer having discretion to refer applications to the Committee in exceptional circumstances.

In accordance with Standing Order 25(3), Councillor Pursehouse wished it recorded that he abstained from voting regarding Recommendation A above.

135. CROYDON ROAD, CATERHAM REDEVELOPMENT – AWARD OF CONTRACT

The press and public were excluded from this item in accordance with Section 100A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended) on the grounds that:

- (i) the item involved the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act; and
- (ii) the public interest in maintaining the exemption outweighed the public interest in disclosing the information.

Public realm improvement works to Croydon Road, Caterham were scheduled to commence in January 2024. The Council had previously committed £950K of CIL funding towards the scheme, with contributions from other sources totalling £1.5M. Information was provided to the Committee about the contractor selection process and Surrey County Council's requirement (as highway authority) for a security bond. Delegations to appropriate Chief Officers were sought in order to facilitate the project.

In repose to questions from Members, Officers:

- clarified the total budget for the project; and

- explained that the security bond would be paid as a cash deposit and, assuming it would be repaid in full, would not require budgetary provision.

RESOLVED – that:

- A. authority be delegated to the to the Chief Finance Officer to:
 - (i) award the construction contract to the provider of the most economically advantageous tender
 - (ii) pay a security bond to Surrey County Council in accordance with the Council's obligations as the developer of the project;
- B. authority be delegated to the Chief Finance Officer, in conjunction with the Head of Legal, to negotiate and enter into an agreement with Surrey County Council under Section 278 of the Highways Act 1980 for the implementation of a scheme of highway improvements associated with the Croydon Road development, as detailed within the report.

Rising 9.46 pm

This page is intentionally left blank

THE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF TANDRIDGE

PLANNING COMMITTEE

Minutes and report to Council of the meeting of the Committee held in the Council Chamber, Council Offices, Station Road East, Oxted on the 5 October 2023 at 7.30pm.

PRESENT: Councillors Blackwell (Chair), Wren (Vice-Chair), Botten, Chris Farr, Sue Farr, Gray, Moore, Prew, Steeds and Black (Substitute) (In place of Montgomery)

ALSO PRESENT: Councillors Gillman and Nicholas White

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE: Councillors Chotai and Montgomery

136. MINUTES FROM THE MEETING HELD ON THE 7TH SEPTEMBER 2023

The minutes of the meeting were confirmed and signed by the Chair.

137. 2023/839 - RIDGEWAY, HOLLOW LANE, DORMANSLAND, RH7 6NR

The Committee considered a retrospective application for the demolition of existing dwelling and construction of replacement dwelling and the erection of new single storey rear extension with a pitched roof.

The Officer recommendation was to permit, subject to condition.

Sarah Kemp-Powell, an objector, spoke against the application.

Councillor Liz Lockwood of Dormansland Parish Council spoke against the application.

Carl Morris, the applicant's agent, spoke in favour of the application.

During the course of the debate, Councillor Sir Nicholas White requested that the Committee consider three motions for refusal. The reasons for refusal were as follows:

- 1. The proposal in seeking to replace the original dwelling as approved in 2013, with the subsequent approved extensions and including increased proportions to the extension to these previously approved schemes, cumulatively adds unacceptable build form and bulk which is detrimental to the openness of the Green Belt and visual harm to the adjacent protected landscapes of the High Weald AONB and the Heritage Asset of a protected Historic Parkland. As such the proposal with the increased built form is contrary to Policies CSP18 and CSP20 of the Tandridge District Core Strategy (2008), Policies DP10 and DP20 of the Tandridge District Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies (2014), the High Weald AONB Design Guide (2019) and para 176 of the NPPF (2023).*

2. *The proposal perpetuates the adverse relationship between it and the adjacent properties by being overbearing, overshadowing and dominant. The additional extension amendments sought add to the overbearing and intrusive relationship especially to the property, and its amenities, adjacent to the north of Ridgeway. As Such the proposal is contrary to the Policy CSP18 of the Tandridge District Core Strategy (2008), Policy DP7 of the Tandridge District Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies (2014), and the High Weald AONB Design Guide (2019).*
3. *The proposal, by reason of its siting, scale, bulk and design would result in significant harm to the residential amenities of No.54 Beacon Hill by reason of dominance, overbearing and overshadowing effects. As such the proposal would be contrary to Policy DP7 of the Tandridge District Local Plan Part 2: Detailed Policies (2014) and Policy CSP18 of the Tandridge District Core Strategy (2008).*

Councillor Steeds proposed all three reasons for refusals, which were seconded by Councillor Chris Farr. Upon being put to the vote, all three motions were carried.

RESOLVED – that the application be refused.

138. 2023/806 - ALWYN, GREEN LANE, SHIPLEY BRIDGE, HORLEY, RH6 9TJ

The Committee considered the erection of a single storey flat roofed rear extension, along with a pitched roof over a flat roofed rear extension.

The Officer recommendation was to permit, subject to conditions and Section 106 agreement.

Rachel Farrow, the applicant, spoke in favour of the application.

RESOLVED – that the application be permitted subject to the conditions and a Section 106 agreement.

139. 2022/1255 - BLUE MEADOW, BIRCHWOOD LANE, CHALDON, CATERHAM, SURREY, CR3 5DQ

The Committee considered an application for the erection of an agricultural barn for livestock accommodation.

The Officer recommendation was to authorise delegated authority to the Chief Planning Officer to grant planning permission subject to the completion of a Section 106 Agreement.

Mr Adem Mehmet, the applicant's agent, spoke in favour of the application.

RESOLVED – that delegated authority be authorised to the Chief Planning Officer to grant planning permission subject to the completion of a Section 106 Agreement.

140. RECENT APPEAL DECISIONS RECEIVED

The Committee received a short update on the following appeal decisions:

TA/2022/889 - Wayside, 542 Limpsfield Road, Warlingham, Surrey CR6 9DS. The application was refused by notice dated 13 December 2022. The appeal was dismissed on 2 October 2023 (Appeal Reference: APP/M3645/W/22/3313522).

TA/2021/2149 - 6 Beadles Lane, Oxted RH8 9JJ. The application was refused by notice dated 16 June 2022 following the Planning Committee meeting on 9 June 2022. The appeal was allowed on 2 October 2023 (Appeal Reference: APP/M3645/W/22/3307368).

TA/2022/245 - 5 Queens Park Road, Caterham, Surrey CR3 5RB. The application was refused by notice dated 1 September 2022. The appeal was allowed on 28 September 2023 (Appeal Reference: APP/M3645/W/22/3311144)

TA/2022/98 - Hut 1, Harestone Drive, Caterham, Surrey CR3 6YQ. The application was refused by notice dated 5 August 2022 following the Planning Committee meeting on 28 July 2022. The appeal was dismissed on 11 September 2023 (Appeal Reference: APP/M3645/W/22/3309224).

Rising 8.33 pm

This page is intentionally left blank