

AH OK MINUTES OF A MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD AT COUNTY HALL AND ON TEAMS ON TUESDAY, 28 MARCH 2023

PRESENT

County Councillor J Gibson-Watt (Chair)

County Councillors J Berriman, J Charlton, R Church, S Cox, M J Dorrance, S McNicholas, P Roberts, D Selby and D A Thomas

In attendance: County Councillors J Brignell-Thorp, Angela Davies, H Hulme

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from the Chief Executive.

2. MINUTES

The Leader was authorised to sign the minutes of the last meeting held on 7th March 2023 as a correct record.

3. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest reported.

4. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT (HRA) THIRTY YEAR FINANCIAL BUSINESS PLAN 2023-2024

Cabinet considered the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Thirty Year Financial Business Plan Starting 2023-2024. In presenting the report the Cabinet Member for a Fairer Powys thanked the Economy, Residents and Communities Committee for their recommendations and the Tenants Scrutiny Panel for their feedback. The Scrutiny Committee's recommendations were accepted and a response provided.

The HRA Thirty Year Business Plan for Powys:

- Supports the outcomes of the Council's Corporate and Strategic Equalities Plan: 'Stronger, Fairer, Greener'.
- Makes sure the HRA treasury management strategy is prudent and complies with the Council's approach to borrowing.
- Sets a balanced budget with minimum reserve of £1,000,000 (or 3% of expenditure).
- Allows the Council to maintain WHQS for current homes.
- Supports the development of at least 350 new homes by 2031.
- Balances the need to keep rents affordable with making sure that homes are maintained and kept in good condition.
- Maximises revenue and expenditure efficiencies.
- Complies with the Prudential Code.

£159 million would be invested over the next 5 years for building of new social housing stock and improvement in the existing stock. The Cabinet Member for a Fairer Powys said he regarded the target to build 311 new homes by 2027/28 as realistic and achievable, but that he would be prepared to look again at increasing the target in twelve to eighteen months. He noted that the Council's housing association partners also had a responsibility to provide housing. He advised that the Council was looking to build different types of housing with most demand for one and two bedroom properties.

County Councillor Angela Davies, Chair of the Economy, Residents and Communities Scrutiny Committee, presented the Committee's recommendations. The Committee had found the HRA Business Plan to be robust and thorough but had been concerned at how the Council could meet the raising level of demand. Members were particularly concerned to understand the situation in their own wards and the Cabinet Member for a Fairer Powys advised that the Housing service would be setting up locality meetings for members similar to those for HTR.

RESOLVED to approve the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Thirty Year Business Plan 2023-2024, as set out in the HRA Business Plan Narrative (attached to the report as Appendix A).

5. WINTER SERVICE REVIEW PHASE 2

Cabinet considered a report on Phase 2 of the Winter Service review which proposed updating the criteria used to determine the Council's winter gritting routes and associated measures in-line with the latest guidance and legislative requirements. Phase 2 of the Winter Service Review was about picking key factors to help group roads together and decide a priority order for those groups for winter services.

Appendix 1 to the report provided detail on the methodology used to identify groupings and priorities together with recommendations for Route Criteria and Categorisation. This recommends a five group or "Tier" approach to produce a hierarchy that ensures equitable service delivery having regard to a range of factors.

Appendix 2 to the report provided a matrix of the proposed hierarchical group or "Tier" structure using the process set out in Appendix 1.

The Cabinet Member for a Greener Powys confirmed that once the hierarchy had been established, Members would be able to see what the various criteria would mean for routes. The service would consult with members, key partners such as health and education, and carry out a public engagement exercise to help the service shape the model. Once this exercise had been concluded updated routes would be prepared and issued for consultation.

County Councillor Heulwen Hulme, leader of the Independent Group, noted that the review had been delayed by Covid and she welcomed it being progressed at pace.

RESOLVED

1. to note the proposed updated Winter Service Hierarchy in accordance with best practice as set out in Appendix 1 and 2 of the report.
2. to undertake a public engagement exercise on the groupings and Tiers as set out in Appendix 1 and 2 to the report.
3. to consider the findings of the public engagement and return to cabinet confirming the route criteria and categorisation, with options for route assignment, treatment levels of each Tier and the financial implications of the proposals.

6.	DELEGATED DECISIONS TAKEN SINCE THE LAST MEETING
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The delegated decisions taken by Cabinet members since the last meeting were noted.

7.	FORWARD WORK PROGRAMME
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Cabinet noted the forward work programme. The Cabinet Member for a Connected Powys advised that the Corporate Asset Policy would be rescheduled.

County Councillor J Gibson-Watt (Chair)