

REPORT OF CABINET

(Meeting held on 7 October 2020)

1. RESPONSE TO CORONAVIRUS – COVID-19 – UPDATE (MINUTE NO 124)

The Cabinet are pleased to see the progress of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Panels in continuing the momentum of recovery following the work of the COVID-19 Recovery Task and Finish Groups throughout the Summer.

It is anticipated that the Local Economy Group will provide a final report to Cabinet in December 2020, whilst the Community Stakeholder Engagement Group will, in due course, continue its work reporting directly to the Community and Leisure Overview and Scrutiny Panel.

2. LOCAL RESTRICTIONS SUPPORT (MINUTE NO 125)

The Cabinet has received an update on the role of New Forest District Council in Local Restrictions Support.

The Leader of the Council explained that the Council's key role was to EDUCATE, SUPPORT and ENCOURAGE. The regulations required the District Council to provide an educational role to the community, supporting public messaging, helping residents and businesses to understand the support available to them, and ensuring that support was made available promptly.

The Council would also work with residents and other agencies to encourage and ensure compliance with new laws and assist with track and trace sharing.

3. MILFORD-ON-SEA, WESTOVER – SEA WALL FAILURE AND URGENT WORKS (MINUTE NO 126)

The Cabinet, having received an update on the progress of the urgent works to Westover Sea Wall, are delighted to confirm that funding applications made to the Southern Regional Flood and Coastal Committee were approved on 22 September 2020, both for £600,000 towards the urgent works and £250,000 to enable development work to commence for phase two. Cabinet would like to recognise the work of the team in securing this much needed funding, which will reduce the Council's financial commitment and liability.

4. STATUS OF SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENTS (MINUTE NO 127)

Following the adoption of the Local Plan by the Council in July 2020, the Cabinet confirmed the continuing status, as material planning considerations, of the Council's Supplementary Planning Documents and Guidance, as set out in Appendix A of Cabinet Report 7 of the Cabinet Agenda.

A number of supplementary planning documents have been published over a number of years and the adoption of the Local Plan meant it was necessary to confirm that these remain in force.

5. ADOPTION OF REVISED STATEMENT OF COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT (MINUTE NO 128)

The Cabinet, having considered the outcomes of the public consultation that took place for six weeks on the proposed amendments to the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), is reporting to Council.

The proposed policy has been the subject of a six week public consultation period. The document addressed the responses and set out how the Council engages with the public and stakeholders in the formulation of policy and plans, and with the determination of applications.

RECOMMENDED:

(a) That the outcomes of the public consultation that took place for 6 weeks on the proposed amendments to the Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), be noted; and

(b) The changes to the SCI set out in Appendix 2 of Cabinet Report 8 of the Cabinet Agenda, be agreed and (subject to any final non-material editing) the amended SCI document, be adopted.

6. REVISED PRE-APPLICATION SERVICE (MINUTE NO 129)

Following consideration by the Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel, the Cabinet agreed to a four week consultation on the proposed redesigned pre-application planning service. The outcome of the consultation will be reported back to Cabinet for it consider whether a redesigned service should be launched in January 2021.

The pre-application service was a paid - for service (with the exception of listed buildings), where applicants or agents may approach the Council to discuss applications before submission. This brought the Council's pre application service in line with other compatible authorities and related best practice.

7. PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE – REFORM OF THE PLANNING SYSTEM (MINUTE NO 130)

The Cabinet noted the key elements and implications of the Government consultation on changes to the planning system, and delegated authority to the Chief Planning Officer to respond to the consultation, with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Infrastructure.

The Government had recently published two planning consultation documents; the first one covering the planning system, which had now closed and the Council had submitted its response.

This second consultation featured wider reforms. It was felt that while many of the objectives of the consultation were to be welcomed, there were two main concerns. Firstly with the Government's apparent perception that the difficulties in housing delivery was a planning problem, as it was observed that many sites across the District and in neighbouring areas had obtained planning permission, yet the developments had not come forward.

Secondly, it was felt that given planning and housing were highly complex industries, the proposals had an over - simplistic approach which did not give sufficient regard to practicalities. The Cabinet therefore had significant reservations on some aspects. Accordingly the Leader confirmed that once the Council had submitted

its formal response to the consultation, representations would be made to the District's two local MPs.

8. DELEGATION OF POWERS TO OFFICERS

The Cabinet approved technical amendments to the Council's Delegation of Powers to Officers that are the responsibility of the Cabinet. The amendments take into account new legislation and changes to staffing structures.

**COUNCILLOR B RICKMAN
CHAIRMAN**