

CABINET

A meeting of Cabinet was held on Thursday 16 March 2023.

Present: Cllr Robert Cook (Leader), Cllr Lisa Evans (Cabinet Member), Cllr Norma Stephenson OBE (Cabinet Member), Cllr Mrs Ann McCoy (Cabinet Member), Cllr Steve Nelson (Cabinet Member) and Cllr Nigel Cooke (Cabinet Member).

Officers: Mike Greene (CE), Garry Cummings (F,D&R&DCE), Ged Morton, Julie Butcher, Peter Bell (CS), Reuben Kench (CS,E&C), Ann Workman (A&H) and Martin Gray (ChS).

Also in attendance: Cllr Clare Gamble and Cllr Carol Clark

Apologies: None

CAB/83/22 Evacuation Procedure

The Chair welcomed everyone to the meeting and the evacuation procedure was noted.

CAB/84/22 Declarations of Interest

There were no interests declared.

CAB/85/22 Minutes

Consideration was given to the minutes of the meetings held on 13 and 23 February 2023.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting held on 13 and 23 February 2023 be agreed and signed as a correct record.

CAB/86/22 Social Value Policy

Consideration was given to a report on a new Social Value Policy with updated links to the Council Plan, the Inclusive Growth Strategy, A Fairer Stockton-on-Tees Strategic Framework and the Environmental Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Strategy.

The Social Value (Public Services) Act 2012 came into effect for all English and Welsh public bodies on 31st January 2013 and required local authorities to have regard to economic, social and environmental well-being when tendering for public services contracts. The original Social Value Policy introduced in 2013 had been reviewed and updated. The report sought approval from Cabinet of a new Social Value Policy. A copy of the new Social Value Policy was attached to the report.

The Public Services (Social Value) Act 2012 had the aim of encouraging all public bodies to consider 'social value' prior to commencing a tender process. Social Value was a process whereby public bodies meet their needs for goods, services, works and utilities in a way that achieved value for money on a whole life basis whilst additionally generating benefits to society and the economy, whilst minimising damage to the environment.

The types of social value that could be derived from procurement could be quite varied and should be influenced by the Council's own strategic priorities (strategic fit) and the conditions and circumstances within the locality, although not necessarily restricted by this e.g. requirements relating to fair trade may affect global trade.

The report detailed some examples of some areas of potential social value that could be considered when contracting.

Since the original Social Value Policy was implemented, the Council had successfully included social value in many contracts to some degree. The extent of inclusion was dependent on the nature, scale and value of the contract; with most social value realised through high value construction contracts and some services contracts.

In 2018, the Council commenced a pilot study using the Themes, Outcomes and Measures (TOMs) system. A national system developed by the Social Value Portal (endorsed by the LGA) to convert social value into a financial proxy that quantified the impact on local communities, thereby providing a mechanism to measure social value in a consistent and robust manner. The financial proxies had been developed nationally through academic research and were used by many English and Welsh Councils. The TOMs system / approach used by the Council included up to 41 social value measures and these were detailed within the report. A full list of the TOMs was attached to the report.

The TOMs had been mapped against the priorities in the Council's Inclusive Growth Strategy, A Fairer Stockton-on-Tees Strategic Framework and the Environmental Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Strategy and the relevant measures within TOMs linked to those strategies had been weighted and prioritised for use during the tender process. The approach allowed better targeting of social value to areas that were most important. The relevant measures were included in the tender process depending on the category and value of the contract. This ensured bidders were clear on what type of social value was important to Stockton Council during the tender process.

By converting social value to financial proxy measures had provided a robust mechanism for the Council to monitor the total amount of social value achieved by successful bidders gathered through regular contract management. A table within the report below highlighted the total proxy financial value delivered since 2019/20, clearly highlighting the impact and improved means of measuring social value that the TOMs system has delivered since implementation in 2018.

Two case studies were attached to the report which demonstrated how social value was delivered through a construction contract and a services contract.

Future reporting of social value received would be through the Inclusive Growth Strategy, A Fairer Stockton-on-Tees Strategic Framework and the Environmental Sustainability and Carbon Reduction Strategy.

RESOLVED that the Social Value Policy be approved.

CAB/87/22 Procurement Plan

Consideration was given to a report that sought approval for the award of planned higher value contracts where the value exceeds the limit on officer delegated authority and which were either funded within the approved MTFP/ Capital Programme or were subject to a bid for external funding.

The constitution defined a range of decisions that required a specific Cabinet approval, the financial threshold for which was set at a level of £500k or more. An annex to the report listed contracts that exceeded the financial threshold and had not otherwise been delegated to officers.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The contracts listed in Annex 1 to the report be approved.
2. Authority be given to the relevant Director or Assistant Director to make the specific contract award decision and any subsequent contract variation, annual inflationary uplifts (where allowed in the contract terms and conditions) and extension decision in accordance with the delegations listed in Annex 1 to the report.

CAB/88/22 Minutes of Various Bodies

In accordance with the Council's Constitution or previous practice the minutes of the meeting of the bodies indicated below were submitted to members for consideration:-

TVCA Cabinet – 27 January 2023
TSAB – 6 December 2022
SSP – 23 November 2022

RESOLVED that the minutes detailed in the appendices be received.

CAB/89/22 His Majesty King Charles III Coronation - Events & Cultural Activity Programme 2023

Consideration was given to a report on His Majesty King Charles III Coronation - Events & Cultural Activity Programme 2023.

In celebration of His Majesty King Charles III's Coronation in 2023, Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council had developed a programme of events and cultural activities to mark this special occasion.

In addition to the largescale Coronation Big Lunch event in Stockton High Street, the Council had developed a Coronation digital programme, including competitions, activities and on-line tutorials. Library and Museum Services had also developed a range of events, talks exhibitions and legacy events, and the Council's Community Engagement Team were supporting the Community Partnerships with their local celebrations.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

CAB/90/22 Levelling Up Fund round 1 progress update

Consideration was given to a report Levelling Up Fund Round 1 Progress Update.

The report provided an update on work undertaken since approval of Round 1 Levelling Up Funding (LUF) and sought approval for submission of a formal request into Department for Levelling Up Homes and Communities (DLUHC) to reprofile and reallocate funding across the approved programme of interventions.

Following the report to Cabinet in July 2022, work had been ongoing to develop a greater level of detail around the agreed interventions under the LUF Round 1 programme as well as further engagement with the public to help refine options for Yarm High Street.

The approved LUF programme at approval in 2021 saw £20million split across Preston Park, Museum and Grounds (£9m), Yarm High Street (£6.5m) and cycle infrastructure (£4.5m) supplemented by co funding from Council funds and Yarm Town Council.

The report gave updates on:-

- Levelling Up Fund Scope
- Yarm High Street - Public Realm Improvement Scheme
- Yarm Town Hall
- Preston Park Museum and Grounds
- Cycleways

With regard to the budget position the LUF funding was split across the three themes within the scope of LUF funding based on estimates at the time of submitting the LUF bid. The body of the report had set out a more detailed view on work undertaken and provided a clearer understanding of costs and deliverability across the interventions.

The detail within the report demonstrated that there was a cost pressure on the envisaged scope of interventions at Preston Park and across the full extent of the proposed cycle infrastructure. Given the budget requirement and deficit against approved allocations for Preston Park and the cycle infrastructure, a reallocation of LUF funding from Yarm High Street could enable delivery of the full scope of planned works at Preston Park but would still not enable the delivery of more than one cycle route.

Taking the above detail and considerations into account it was recommended that Cabinet agree to the principle of reallocating £3m LUF funding from Yarm High Street to support delivery of interventions in Preston Park Museum and Gardens. A table within the report summarised the approved position bid and proposed changes.

RESOLVED that:-

1. The principle of reallocating of £3million LUF funds previously estimated to be required for Yarm High Street to support a broader range of interventions in Preston Park as set out in paragraph 29 of the report be agreed.

2. The challenges associated with delivering the original scope of cycle infrastructure be noted and the delivery of a single route, as set out in paragraph 26 of the report be approved.

3. The submission of a formal Project Adjustment Request into DLUHC reflecting the spend profile detailed in paragraphs 29-30 of the report be approved.

4. Delegate authority be given to agree final scheme details and any associated contracts or agreements to enable delivery of the LUF programme to the Director of Finance, Development and Regeneration in consultation with Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing and Director of Corporate Services.

CAB/91/22 Inclusive Growth

Consideration was given to a report that provided an overview of relevant key announcements as they related to the economy and the Inclusive Growth Strategy 2022-27, such as the £39.4m in private sector financial investment and the creation of 307 jobs.

The report included the following key areas:-

- Strategic Updates
- Support businesses to survive and grow
- New businesses and investment are being attracted to the Borough creating new jobs
- All residents have access to training linked to skills gaps and job opportunities
- Deliver interventions that facilitate inclusive growth

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

CAB/92/22 Local Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document

Consideration was given to a report on the Local Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document.

A Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) provided guidance on how Local Plan policies were applied and would be a material consideration when determining applications for planning permission within the Borough.

This “Local Design Guide” SPD had been prepared as part of a suite of guidance documents that expanded on policies within the adopted Local Plan (2019). The Local Design Guide SPD and accompanying technical appendices (Appendices A – E to the report) were intended as a guide for the design of development sites, with an aim to improving the quality of design within development proposals.

The Local Design Guide SPD and accompanying technical appendices had been published for public consultation and the documents had been amended where appropriate based on the consultation comments received.

It was recommended to adopt the SPD to be used in the determination of planning applications from the point of adoption. If adopted this SPD would supersede and replace existing planning guidance.

The SPD had been prepared in accordance with Government legislation and guidance and had been subject to public consultation in accordance with regulations. Comments raised had been considered and, where necessary adjustments to the documents had been made. It was therefore recommended that the documents, as amended and attached at Appendix A to E of the report be adopted.

Following adoption, the documents would be made available in the Council's main offices, on the Council's website and in public libraries across the Borough. The SPD would be a material consideration in planning applications. Members were also made aware that legislation made provision for individuals / organisations to pursue a legal challenge regarding SPDs, and this would end 3-months after adoption of the documents.

RECOMMENDED to Council that:-

1. Council notes the contents of the report.
2. Council note and consider comments of Planning Committee (to be tabled at meeting).
3. Council adopts the Local Design Guide Supplementary Planning Document and its accompanying technical appendices.
4. Council delegates the authority to approve non-material and minor alterations to the SPD and its accompanying technical appendices to the Cabinet Member for Regeneration and Housing, and the Director of Finance, Development and Regeneration, prior to publication.
5. Council note that the Local Design SPD will apply to all planning applications submitted to the Council after the adoption date and the following Supplementary Planning Documents will be superseded:
 - Supplementary Planning Document 1: Sustainable Design Guide
 - Supplementary Planning Guidance: High Density Development: Flats and Apartments
 - Supplementary Planning Document: Shop Front Design and Advertisements
 - The following elements of Supplementary Planning Document: Open Space, Recreation and Landscaping:
 - 8) Landscaping on development sites
 - Appendix 2- Planting within Stockton-on-Tees
 - Appendix 3- Tree protection
 - Appendix 4: Tree planting specification for softscape areas