

**STRATEGY AND RESOURCES SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

28 March 2022

5.00 - 5.29 pm

**Present:** Councillors Robertson (Chair), H. Davies (Vice-Chair), Dalzell, Healy and S. Smith

Executive Councillors: Davey (Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources), Herbert (Executive Councillor for External Partnerships) and A. Smith (Executive Councillor for Communities)

**Also present (virtually):** Councillors Bick and A Smith (Executive Councillor for Communities)

**Officers:**

Strategic Director: Fiona Bryant

Committee Manager: Claire Tunnicliffe

Meeting Producer: Boris Herzog

**Other Officers Present Virtually:**

Assistant Chief Executive: Andrew Limb

Head of Finance: Caroline Ryba

Head of Property Services: Dave Prinsep

Principal Property Surveyor: Clare Mitchell

**FOR THE INFORMATION OF THE COUNCIL**

**22/13/SR Apologies for Absence**

No apologies were received.

**22/14/SR Declarations of Interest**

No declarations were declared.

**22/15/SR Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 07 February 2022 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

**22/16/SR Public Questions**

There were no public questions.

**22/17/SR Update on the Work of Key External Partnerships**

The report provided an update on the work of the following partnerships:

- The Cambridgeshire and Peterborough Combined Authority (including the Business Board)
- Greater Cambridge Partnership
- Fast Growing Cities
- Innovation Corridor (London-Stanstead-Cambridge Consortium)
- Cambridge – Milton Keynes – Oxford Arc.

The report highlighted the considerable amount of activity that was taking place in tackling some of the “big challenges” that the city was facing. It also outlined the ongoing joint working between partners and government to help meet these challenges. This year had included responding to the pandemic, which involved partners findings ways to pull together to both ameliorate and find solutions to its impacts.

**Decision of Executive Councillor for External Partnerships**

- i. Noted the achievements and progress of the strategic partnerships that the City Council is engaged with, outlined in the Officer’s report.

**Reason for the Decision**

As set out in the Officer’s report.

**Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

Not applicable.

**Scrutiny Considerations**

The Committee considered a report from the Assistant Chief Executive.

In response to a question concerning the Oxford to Cambridge Arc the Executive Councillor advised that this was not a Central Government priority. However, the City Council was keen to develop broader relationships with those councils along the Arc and to secure East West Rail.

The Committee discussed the Fast-Growing Cities referenced in the report, the returns on the financial contributions these cities made to national Government

and how strategic lobbying of government was needed to support fast-growing cities.

The Assistant Chief Executive responded that over the last ten years the Council had secured a large amount of Government funding, referencing examples from the Government funded City Deal (the most generous deal per head per population of any City Deals done at that time), the Combined Authority funding including £70million for 500 council houses in Cambridge, and the potential £200+million for the relocation of the waste water treatment plant from North East Cambridge. But despite these grants and future funding the city faced economic, environmental, and social challenges.

The Executive Councillor highlighted the work that the Centre for Cities think tank had completed, including a report on the impact of COVID on cities. Although the Council did not agree with all the suggestions put forward, the need for affordable housing and highlighting the inequality throughout the city strengthened the requirement for continued funding.

In answer to a question concerning the projects that had been put forward for funding from the Combined Authority's medium-term budget, the Executive Councillor stated normally there would have been greater engagement with members for their input, but this had not been possible due to the deadline set had meant additional work for officers during the budget setting period and other major works.

The City Portrait (p20) referenced in the report was part of the language used in doughnut economics; a relatively low-cost project to produce a summary analysis of equality, climate, and environmental impacts in the city.

Noted the comment that the work had been undertaken on the Local Plan and emerging Greater Cambridge Local Plan which was an opportunity to link this work and City Portrait work together.

Agreed that the Combined Authority should encourage all Councillors and the public to have an input in future projects and works.

The Assistant Chief Executive advised there were various sources of gathering data which the Council could explore. The Combined Authority-funded City Portrait project could determine if these research methods were applicable which may help inform balanced and rounded decision making understanding the interplay between the social, environmental, and economic factors.

The Committee **unanimously resolved** to endorse the recommendation.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

### **Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)**

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

## **22/18/SR General Fund Revenue Carry-Forwards**

### **Matter for Decision**

This report presented details of anticipated variances from budgets, where resources were requested to be carried forward into the 2022/23 financial year in order to undertake or complete activities anticipated to have taken place in 2021/22.

### **Decision of Executive Councillor for Finance and Resources**

- i. Agreed the provisional carry forward requests, totalling £579,010 as detailed in Appendix A of the Officer's report, recommended to Council to approve, subject to the final outturn position.

### **Reason for the Decision**

As set out in the Officer's report.

### **Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

Not applicable.

### **Scrutiny Considerations**

The Committee considered a report from the Head of Finance.

In response to a question on the underspend on Finance General (p39, appendix A) and whether that meant that services had not been delivered as budgeted, the Head of Finance advised this information would be provided outside of the meeting as the cost centre was a mix of different corporate amounts and she would have to look at the detail.

The Committee unanimously resolved by 4 votes to 0 to endorse the recommendation.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

**Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)**

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

**22/19/SR Sale of 11 Thorpe Way**

**Matter for Decision**

The report referred to the leaseholder's request of 11 Thorpe Way to buy the freehold of the property.

**Decision of Executive Councillor for Strategy and External Partnerships**

- i. Approved the freehold transfer of 11 Thorpe Way to the current leaseholder.

**Reason for the Decision**

As set out in the Officer's report.

**Any Alternative Options Considered and Rejected**

Not applicable.

**Scrutiny Considerations**

The Committee considered a report from the Head of Property Services.

The Committee unanimously resolved to endorse the recommendation.

The Executive Councillor approved the recommendation.

**Conflicts of Interest Declared by the Executive Councillor (and any Dispensations Granted)**

No conflicts of interest were declared by the Executive Councillor.

The meeting ended at 5.29 pm

**CHAIR**

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