

## **Cabinet – Meeting held on Thursday, 8th April, 2010.**

**Present:-** Councillors Anderson (Chair), S Chaudhry, S K Dhaliwal, Matloob, Pantelic, Parmar, Small and Swindlehurst

### **PART 1**

#### **108. Declarations of Interest**

No declarations of interest were received.

#### **109. Minutes**

The minutes of the meetings held on the 8<sup>th</sup> March and the 23<sup>rd</sup> March, 2010 were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

#### **110. Financial Performance Reporting for 2009/10**

The Cabinet considered a report which detailed the capital monitoring position to February 2010. The Cabinet was advised that, for this meeting only, financial performance monitoring was being treated as a separate report but in future it would realign with the performance monitoring data. The report contained information on the projected end of year outturn position on the budget. The Cabinet were advised that the Council was expecting to deliver a breakeven position at the end of the financial year.

**Resolved:** - That the following aspects of the report be noted:  
i. Financial Performance – Revenue and Capital

#### **111. Order of Business**

The Chair proposed and the Cabinet agreed to vary the order of business to take agenda item 8 – Land at rear of Woodlands Avenue, Slough next.

#### **112. Land at Rear of Woodlands Avenue, Slough**

The Cabinet considered a report which advised Commissioners of the options available for the land at the rear of Woodlands Avenue that had been declared surplus to the Council's requirements. The Commissioner for Performance and Accountability advised that the Council had been in discussions with the Trustees of the Ramgharia Sikh Gurdwara as the trustees had approached the Council with a request to acquire the land for recreational purposes. It was felt that the Gurdwara was best placed to deal with the possible contamination issues and the future of the site could also be ensured by limiting future development and requiring that the land is well maintained as a condition of the lease. The Commissioner thanked the officers responsible for the preparation that had led to the current proposals..

The Director of Resources advised that the proposal was to make the land available by way of a lease with the final terms to be agreed under delegated authority. It was agreed that a timeline and update reports on progress would be made available to Commissioners. A Member raised a concern regarding the possible historic pollution on the site and requested reassurance that this would be addressed. The Council was confident that the Gurdwara would be able to address pollution concerns, although it was difficult to assess the problem as an investigation was yet to take place.

The Commissioner for Neighbourhoods and Renewal suggested that it would be preferable for the lease in question to be arranged coterminous with the Gurdwara's current lease. Members agreed that as the land was not viable for any commercial or residential use they were fully supportive of this proposal.

**Resolved:** – That the subject property be disposed of by way of Long Lease to the Ramgharia Shri Gurdwara on terms to be approved by the Strategic Director of Resources under Delegated Authority with the following recommendations:

- (i) That the lease for the land at rear of Woodlands Avenue be coterminous with the existing lease for the land occupied by the Ramgharia Sikh Gurdwara Social Centre.
- (ii) That a timescale and updates on the process be provided to Commissioners.

### **113. Children's Centre Capital Projects - Phase 3 Children's Centre Development**

The Strategic Director of Education and Children's Services advised the Cabinet of the developments that had taken place over the past few years in relation to children centres in Slough. Cabinet was requested to note the intention to develop children's centre services on the Thames Valley Community Centre site and to approve extensions and improvements to five existing children centres. The purpose of this was to add additional accommodation for childcare, nursery education and multi agency services. The report contained an appendix which detailed the activity taking place at each children's centre, this was provided in response to a previous request by the Cabinet.

A Commissioner raised a concern about signage for the Romsey Close Children's Centre. The Development Manager, Children's Centres advised that this was recognised as an issue and that the planning department had been approached for signage for the centre. Individual signage had been commissioned for use on each building and a marketing campaign would be implemented in order to raise awareness of the centres. Children's centres were usually named after the roads in which they were situated in order to help members of the public locate them. However, it was felt that Romsey Close itself was not well known. In response to a query the Director of Education and Children's Services advised that the funding had gone further expected and the Council had been able to deliver the maximum number of children's centres. The Leader reported that development of children's

centres were vulnerable to any form of cutbacks in the post election period and assurance was given that the proposed developments were sustainable and would deliver future sustainability.

**Resolved: –**

That Sure Start Service's intention to develop Children's Centre services on the Thames Valley Community Centre site, funded by the DCSF Children's Centre revenue grant be noted.

- (a) That an extension is built at the existing Chalvey Grove Children's Centre on the Montem Primary School site to provide an additional 52 part time nursery education places, office / meeting space for multi-agency services, a larger adult learning room, a sensory room and a new reception area to include open plan space for library services,
- (b) That internal adaptation is carried out at the existing Monksfield Way Children's Centre on the Claycots Primary School site to create a larger adult learning room and to move the office from the first floor to the ground floor to improve the security of the building and to enlarge the reception area,
- (c) That internal adaptation is carried out at the existing Penn Road Children's Centre on the Penn Wood Primary School site to create a flexible room for multi-agency services, open plan space for library services and a sensory room for children under 5,
- (d) That an extension is built at the existing Romsey Close Children's Centre on the Marish Primary School site to enlarge the floor space for the day care of children aged 2 and 3 years and to enlarge the Family Room to accommodate a wider range of multi-agency services,
- (e) That an extension is built at the existing Yew Tree Road Children's Centre on the St. Mary's CE Primary School site to create space for 30 full day care places for children aged 3 months to 4 years, a multi-use room for 24 out of school places and a flexible meeting room for multi-agency services.

**114. Children's Centre Development - Colnbrook**

The Cabinet considered a report which sought approval for the transfer of the development of a graduated children centre from Colnbrook Primary School to the old school buildings in Vicarage Way. This item was added to the agenda at short notice as an urgent decision was required for the change of location due to the limited time available to obtain planning permission and complete the building work. Members were advised that the Colnbrook Children's Centre was approved by Cabinet last year and was due to be built on a brown filled site at the existing primary school. However, there was found to be contamination on this site and due to the cost and time requirements to remedy this, new premises were required. The old school in Colnbrook was identified as the most appropriate site and Cabinet welcomed the development of this derelict building to once again host activities centred around children and learning especially regarding the complicated arrangements with the diocese regarding the site.

**Resolved:** - That the change of location for the Colnbrook Children's Centre from the Colnbrook C of E Primary School site to the Old School building in Vicarage Way and the refurbishment of the Old School building be approved.

**115. Heart of Slough: New Central Library, Learning and Cultural Centre**

The Cabinet considered a report outlining the vision and proposals for the design of the new central library, learning centre and cultural centre which was planned for completion in 2012/13 as part of the Heart of Slough project. The Assistant Director, Learning and Cultural Engagement advised that the residents of Slough had a variety of needs which would be joined up in the new learning centre which would encompass cultural, arts and citizenship facilities.

Representatives from Bblur architects delivered a presentation to the meeting outlining the design of the building and detailing how it would contribute to the regeneration of the town centre. It was emphasised to Cabinet that the building would form an integral part of the Heart of Slough project and that this was reflected in the design. The building would create a north-south link, connecting William Street and Mackenzie Square and correspondingly, each entrance was designed to be open and transparent with lounge areas and information desks immediately accessible.

The Cabinet considered that the building would be able to extend the use of the town centre into the evening. A Commissioner commented that the building would provide a complimentary background to the Church and improve the image of Slough for those travelling along Bath Road. A Commissioner raised some concerns with the lighting requirements of the building and the internal layout. However planning permission had yet to be sought and these issues would be carefully considered in the final design proposals. The Assistant Director Learning and Cultural Engagement informed that views on the internal layout will be accommodated as much as is possible, recognising the multifunctional requirements of the building, and before layout is finalised through wider stakeholder consultation.

The Commissioner for Performance and Accountability noted that the building would use approximately 50% less energy than the currently and would include solar panels. A Commissioner raised a concern regarding children's access to computer facilities. The Director of Community and Wellbeing advised that these issues would be carefully considered when the operational requirements of the service were being finalised and through wider stakeholder consultation.

The Director of Resources advised that the finance for the entire project was £17.5m; close to the original estimate of £17m. An additional £500k was required for the extra services which were added into the learning centre. The Leader questioned how this fitted in with work on other buildings. It was emphasised that the shopping centres were engaged with the Planning

department on possible developments and were showing interest in the Heart of Slough project. It was noted that progress was being made on the retail offer.

**Resolved:–**

- (a) That officers proceed with a formal application for detailed planning approval for a new library, learning and cultural centre that replaces the Learning Curve contained in the Heart of Slough masterplan, as outlined in this paper.
- (b) That £17.5m capital expenditure be committed within the Heart of Slough budget for completion by the end of 2012.

**116. Contracts in Excess of £250,000**

The Cabinet consider a report which detailed the contract of an estimated value over £250,000 that were proposed to be let in the 2010/11 financial year and any exemptions to competitive tendering due to be approved.

**Resolved:** - That the list of contracts attached to the report as Appendix A be endorsed.

**117. Executive Forward Plan**

Cabinet consider a report which detailed the published forward plan for the period April to July 2010.

**Resolved:** – That the forward plan be approved.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.40 pm and closed at 8.00 pm)