

Cabinet – Meeting held on Monday, 23rd June, 2014.

Present:- Councillors Anderson (Chair), Carter, Hussain, Mann, Munawar, Parmar, Sharif and Swindlehurst

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillors Abe, Coad, Rasib and Strutton

Apologies for Absence:- None.

PART 1

1. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 14th April 2014

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 14th April 2014 be approved as a correct record.

3. Cabinet Portfolios and Commissioner Responsibilities

The Leader welcomed Commissioners to the first meeting of the Cabinet since the elections held on 22nd May 2014, and in particular Councillor Hussain and Councillor Carter who had taken on the portfolios for Health & Wellbeing and Community & Leisure respectively.

Resolved – That the revised portfolios and responsible Commissioners be noted.

4. Slough Labour Party's Manifesto

The Cabinet were presented with the Slough Labour Party's Manifesto for the 2014 elections and noted the key pledges that it contained. It was noted that implementation was already underway in a number of areas.

The Commissioner for Environment & Open Spaces reminded the Cabinet that 10,000 trees had been planted since the 2012 local elections, which was in excess of the figure noted in the document.

Resolved – That the Slough Labour Party's Manifesto be noted.

5. Results of the Harrow Market Experimental Scheme consultation and Consideration of Future Options

The Team Leader (Road Safety and Integrated Transport) introduced a report outlining the results of the public consultation on the experimental changes to the road layout of the Harrow Market in Langley and sought approval for the general principles of the final layout of the junction.

Commissioners were reminded of the background to the experimental scheme, including the measures trialled and assessed in the three phases since April 2013. Members were advised that the Council had a legal duty to improve road safety, as set out in the report, and the Harrow Market area and approaches had been identified by the Road Safety team's annual cluster analysis as having a high number of collisions involving pedestrians and cyclists. The assessment of the three phases of the scheme included consideration of speed and journey time data as well as accident data, and the Cabinet were informed that this data showed a general reduction in accidents, particularly pedestrian accidents, which had fallen from eight in the three years leading up to the scheme down to one during the period of the experiment.

A wide ranging consultation process had been undertaken which revealed that respondents did not support any reduction in lane widths on the approach to the junction; divided opinion on traffic calming; and a clear majority in support of a 20mph zone. All of the evidence and consultation had been considered in developing the principles of a permanent scheme for Cabinet consideration as set out in figure 5.1 (junction layout) and figure 5.2 (car parking layout). In summary, the proposal was a widening of two approaches to the junction to ease congestion; introduced limited but necessary traffic calming near to new and improved pedestrian crossing points; retention of the 20mph zone; removal of confusing cycle lanes on the carriageway; and improved layout and additional spaces at Harrow Market car park.

Commissioners discussed a number of specific aspects of the scheme including the changes to the car park which it was felt would reduce some of the present obstruction of the junction; the positioning of the bus stops; and design of the traffic calming measures. The Cabinet discussed the results of the extensive consultation that had been undertaken and recognised that the level of support varied for different elements of the trial. It was noted that 492 supported the 20mph zone with 152 against; whereas there was no public support for the trialled narrowing of the approaches to the junction which was why this option had not been taken forward into the final proposal. Commissioners were satisfied that objections had been taken on board and that the scheme proposed generally reflected the outcomes of the consultation, as far as possible, whilst also improving safety and traffic flow.

Councillors Coad and Abe addressed the meeting and highlighted the impacts the experimental scheme had had on road users. They raised questions about the process of consultation and ward Member engagement; safety data; and frequency of services using the bus stops. The Officer responded to these points by providing further detail on the consultation results and the safety and journey time data that had been assessed in developing the proposal. Councillor Abe queried the deliverability of the proposed widening, however the Officer stated that the professional opinion of the Council's traffic engineers was that it was deliverable, subject to the necessary survey work on current services in the ground as reflected in the recommendation. Issues were also raised by Members in relation to the precise positioning of the bus

stops and removal and lay-bys, pedestrian crossing and closing of access to the old Harrow Pub car park. The Officer noted the comments and highlighted that these issues would be considered during the detailed design phase which included further survey work and statutory consultation. It was also stated that the widening of the approaches provided ample space for vehicles to pass a stationary bus.

Following the lengthy discussion, the Cabinet agreed the general principles of the proposed layout of the Harrow Market roundabout, which they felt met the safety objectives of the scheme; improved traffic flows on the junction and car park; and broadly reflected the results of the consultation. It was agreed that officers continue with the detailed design, conducting the necessary statutory consultation, survey work and engagement with Members.

Resolved –

- (a) That the general principles of the proposed layout of the Harrow Market shown in Figure 5.1 be approved.
- (b) That Council officers proceed with detailed design and are allowed a degree of flexibility in the design of the final scheme based upon the results of the following:
 - Road Safety Audits of the proposed scheme.
 - A survey of current services in the ground e.g. gas, water, electricity, on the understanding that widening of the carriageway to the south of the junction may be prohibitively expensive.
 - A statutory consultation including emergency services, the freight haulage association etc. will be carried out if traffic regulation orders or traffic calming is proposed.
- (c) That Council officer's report to the Councillors of the affected wards any significant changes to the design proposed in Figure 5.1 of the report.
- (d) That, subject to a satisfactory detailed design, and following consultation with the Commissioner for Social & Economic Inclusion, construction of the final layout goes ahead within the current financial year 2014/15.

(Councillor Sharif left the meeting)

6. Provisional Financial and Performance Outturn Report: 2013-14 Financial Year

The Assistant Director Finance & Audit introduced a report providing Members with the provisional financial outturn for 2013-14 and summarised the Council's progress against key performance indicators during the financial year.

Members were informed that the Council had achieved a break even position, allowing for a contribution of £150k to a future budget requirement reserve.

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This was despite further reduction in central Government funding and a below inflation Council Tax rise. The Assistant Director highlighted the significant areas of deviation from budget, for example in Children's Social Care, and commented that these in year pressures had been managed. It was noted that the capital outturn was expenditure of £33.3m against a budget of £51.6m with the remainder being re-profiled in 2014-15. The Cabinet also reviewed the Council's performance indicators and Gold Project reports for the year. In relation to the indicator for the number of households in temporary accommodation, it was noted that none of the placements were in Bed & Breakfasts.

The Cabinet welcomed the breakeven position, especially in view of the financial challenges local authorities were facing. It was recognised that the Council's financial model was substantially changing with reductions in central Government spending continuing and increased volatility in income due to the Council bearing greater risk or reward from business rates. Commissioners recognised that future reductions would be significant, particularly in 2015-16, and the outturn achieved during the year provided a solid base for future financial planning.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Cabinet noted the report and approve the re-profiling of the capital programme, virements and write offs as detailed in the report.

Resolved –

- (a) That the provisional revenue outturn for 2013-14 of a break even position be noted. This was after allowing for a contribution of £150k to a future budget requirement reserve.
- (b) That the provisional capital outturn of expenditure of £33.3m against the capital programme of £51.6m be noted, with £16.7m re-profiled into the 2014-15 financial year.
- (c) That it be noted that within the Council's balanced scorecard, 71% of indicators were green, with the following 'red' indicators:
 - i. % of Initial Assessments completed and authorised within 45 working days (in month) in Children's services.
 - ii. Council Tax collection rate
 - iii. Number of Households in temporary accommodation
- (d) That it be noted that 17% of Gold projects had progressed overall as 'green'. Of the six submitted highlighted reports, one had been assessed to have an overall status of Green, three at Amber and two at Red.
- (e) That the revised 2014-15 capital programme be approved to take account of re-profiling of previously approved 2013-14 projects into the 2014-15 programme; with a revised capital programme of £63.6m.

(f) That the Virements and write-offs be approved as detailed in the report.

(Councillor Sharif rejoined the meeting)

7. Statutory Service Plans

The Food & Safety Manager and Acting Trading Standards Manager introduced a report seeking the endorsement of the Cabinet to recommend the Statutory Service Plans for Food Safety; Health & Safety; and Trading Standards to Council on 22nd July 2014.

The Cabinet received a detailed presentation on the activities as set out in the plans and in particular the inspection of high risk food premises and the National Food Hygiene Rating Scheme; the changing role of the Council in relation to Health & Safety at work; the Primary Authority scheme; and work to protect the public from scams, loan sharks and counterfeit goods.

Commissioners discussed a variety of issues including the involvement of youth commissioners in underage sales testing; the Council's role in relation to food labelling; and the response to emerging issues such as the growing use of semi-permanent make up.

The Cabinet welcomed the work that was being undertaken and agreed to recommend the plans to Council at their meeting on 22nd July 2014.

Recommended – That the Statutory Service Plans in relation to the Food Safety, Health & Safety and Trading Standards work undertaken by the Council be endorsed.

8. Consumer Protection and Business Compliance Enforcement Policy

The Licensing Manager introduced a report seeking approval of the Consumer Protection and Business Compliance Enforcement Policy to Council.

The policy succeeded the Enforcement Policy for the then Public Protection Service which Members had approved in 2012, and the review of the policy took account of changes to legislation, the introduction of a new Regulators Code and the formation of the Consumer Protection & Business Compliance Service. The policy provided guidance to officers, managers, businesses and consumers in relation to enforcement actions and decisions, and also ensured that the reasons and justification for the decisions were transparent and accountable, and that they are taken in a proportionate, fair and consistent manner based on risk. The revised document had been subject to consultation and the responses were detailed in the report.

After due consideration, the Cabinet agreed to recommend the Enforcement Policy to Council at its meeting on 22nd July 2014.

Recommended –

- (a) That the draft Consumer Protection and Business Compliance Enforcement Policy be approved.
- (b) That the revised policy be adopted by all other regulatory and enforcement service areas where appropriate within the Council.
- (c) That the Head of Consumer Protection and Business Compliance Services be authorised to make minor amendments to the adopted Policy as required to reflect changes in legislation or guidance and codes of practice where a full review of the Policy is not warranted.

9. Scheme of Delegation to Officers - Executive Functions

Commissioners considered a report seeking formal approval for the Scheme of Delegation to Officers as set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution insofar as the scheme related to executive functions.

The Council had approved the new Scheme of Delegations at its meeting on 22nd April 2014 and a new four part scheme had been adopted. The aims were to streamline decision making and empower officers to make decisions in line with corporate procedures whilst ensuring a robust audit trail.

Commissioners noted that as executive functions could only be delegated by the Cabinet, not by full Council, it was a requirement for the Cabinet to formally adopt the scheme as it related to executive functions.

Resolved – That the Scheme of Delegations to Officers set out in Part 3 of the Council's Constitution (as submitted to and agreed at the Meeting of the Council held on 22nd April 2014) be adopted insofar as the scheme relates to executive functions.

10. References from Overview & Scrutiny

There were no references from Overview & Scrutiny.

11. Notification of Forthcoming Decisions

Members considered and endorsed the published Notification of Forthcoming Decisions for the period 1 June 2014 to 31 August 2014.

Resolved – That the Notification of Decisions be endorsed.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.39 pm and closed at 8.05 pm)