

Cabinet – Meeting held on Monday, 19th October, 2015.

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

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillors Plenty

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor Munawar

PART 1

44. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

45. Minutes of the Meeting held on 14th September 2015

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 14th September 2015 be approved as a correct record.

46. Highway Asset Management Policy & Strategy

The Head of Highways Engineering introduced a report that sought approval for the Highways Asset Management Policy (HAMP) and Highways Asset Management Strategy (HAMS) for managing and maintaining the Council's highways assets.

The proposed policy and strategy provided a strategic approach to the management, operation and enhancement of highways infrastructure which included roads, footways, bridges and street lights across the borough. A key theme of the HAMP was the transition Slough was making from traditional reactive maintenance to a more scientific framework that took a longer term, whole of life approach to managing assets. The policy and strategy was required to set the clear direction and principles after which highway maintenance budgets would be assigned. It was important that Slough implemented HAMS to be awarded full central government funding for local highways maintenance.

The most recent valuation of the highways asset was estimated to be £2.14bn and it was recognised that this needed to be effectively managed to support the local transport network. The Cabinet approved the policy and strategy and agreed that the relevant budgets be assigned in accordance with the documents.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Highway Asset Management Policy & Highway Asset Management Strategy documents dated September 2015 be approved and published for public access onto the Council's website.

- (b) That highway maintenance budgets be assigned to works in accordance with the principles of the Highways Asset Management Plan & Highways Asset Management Strategy.

47. Care Act 2014 - Adult Social Care Contributions Policy

The Acting Director of Adult Social Services introduced a report which recommended a revised Adult Social Care Contributions Policy and charges to self-funders who asked the Council to arrange their non-residential care. The report followed on from the Cabinet decisions in March 2015 and reflected the requirements of the Care Act 2014.

The Care Act gave local authorities the power to charge self-funders who asked the Council to arrange their non-residential care. It was noted that a majority of people with the means to pay for their own care made their arrangements privately but the Council currently arranged the care for 40 people who has been assessed as able to pay the full cost of their care and a further 30 who paid as they had chosen not to disclose the details of their financial circumstances. It was confirmed to Commissioners that the Council could only charge for the cost of setting up and managing care and this had been calculated to be £150. The Cabinet considered the three options which were to continue not to charge; introduce tiered charges with a higher rate in the first year; and a flat-rate annual fee based on recovering the Council's costs of the providing the service. The Cabinet considered the affordability of the charges, the calculation for the recommended level of the charge and the duties on the local authority under the Care Act if a private care provider became insolvent. It was agreed to approve the recommendation that a flat-rate charge of £150 per annum be introduced from April 2016 which would apply to new cases only.

The revised Adult Social Care Contributions Policy, attached at Appendix A to the report, was considered. It had been updated to reflect fully the new legal framework established by the Care Act and incorporate the decisions made by Cabinet in March 2015. There were no further substantive changes to existing policy but the revised version took account of clearer wording in statutory guidance and good practice. After due consideration, it was agreed to adopt the revised policy.

Resolved –

- (a) That Slough introduces a flat-rate fee charge of £150 per year to self-funders for arranging non-residential care from April 2016.
- (b) That Slough adopts the revised Adult Social Care Contributions Policy (Appendix A to the report).

48. Slough Drug & Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) Services Procurement

The Acting Director of Adult Social Services introduced a report regarding the proposal to award contracts for the supply of substance misuse services in Slough.

The Drug and Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) commissioned a range of services to support people with drug and alcohol issues. A review was underway to improve performance, increase the return on investment and deliver efficiencies. A new five year national drug strategy was also due to be published shortly which would help shape local priorities. Two contracts were due to end in April 2016 - Local Area Single Assessment & Referral Team and the Early Intervention and Harm Minimisation Service and psychosocial interventions, clinical co-ordination and intensive engagement for substance misusing parents. In view of the local review, the forthcoming national strategy and accommodation issues it was proposed to award these contracts to Turning Point and CRI respectively for six months, with a possible extension by a further six months if required depending on the pace of the wider transformation and recommissioning process.

The Cabinet considered the service and financial implications, noting the Part II Appendix without disclosing any of the exempt information. Commissioners asked about the possibility of achieving savings and the future balance of drug and alcohol services. The Acting Director responded that year on year savings had been achieved through effective contract management and retendering following the reconfiguration of the service was in the Council's financial interests. The reconfiguration provided an opportunity to review the balance of services and appropriate future allocation of resources. It was also noted that by tendering later in 2016 it allowed the contracts to be have coterminous dates providing greater flexibility to reconfigure the services to respond to changes in strategic objectives and financial changes.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Cabinet agreed to award the two contracts for six months from April 2016, with a possible extension if required.

Resolved –

- (a) That a contract be awarded for six months from 1st April 2016 to Turning Point to deliver the following services;
 - LASAR (Local Area Single Assessment and Referral Team), Early Intervention and Harm Minimisation Service; this is delivered by Turning Point.

- (b) That a contract be awarded for six months from 1st April 2016 to CRI to deliver the following services;
 - Psychosocial interventions
 - Clinical Co-ordination
 - Intensive Engagement for Substance Misusing Parents

Cabinet - 19.10.15

- (c) The initial six month contract will be subject to the progression of the transformation of substance misuse services. Should the transformation process exceed the initial period that there is an option to extend for up to six months, with a three month notice period.
- (d) That if a further six month extension be required under (c), the Director of Adult Social Care be given delegated authority to extend the contract, following consultation with the Commissioner for Health and Wellbeing and the Leader of the Council & Commissioner for Finance & Strategy.

49. References from Overview & Scrutiny

The Cabinet considered two recommendations from the Neighbourhoods & Community Services (NCS) Scrutiny Panel in relation to the A4 Brands Hill and Real Time Passenger Information. The Chair of the Panel, Councillor Plenty, attended and summarised the conclusions the Panel had reached following scrutiny of these issues.

A4 Brands Hill

The Panel had referred the matter of the road design of the A4 Brands Hill to Cabinet, resolving on 3rd September 2015 that:

“The Panel wished to refer their dissatisfaction on the road lay out for the A4 Brands Hill area to Cabinet, on the grounds of planning, design and implementation. This had led to outstanding safety issues, which rendered the highway as not fit for purpose.”

The Chair of the NCS Panel explained that three reports had been brought for scrutiny on the issue in the previous six months and a number of detailed design matters had been raised. Whilst a number of these issues had been addressed, the Panel were concerned about the three lane design with a ‘shared’ middle lane which led to vehicles travelling in both directions using the middle lane, increasing the risk of a serious collision in the view of the Panel. Other concerns included the safety of right turn manoeuvres from the A4 into the petrol filling station and the fact that an agreed loading ban hadn’t yet been implemented with HGVs frequently stopping briefly on the double yellow lines forcing traffic into the shared middle lane. The Panel had suggested a single lane northbound separated by double solid white lines; implementing the loading ban as a priority; and introducing a ‘no right turn’ sign westbound for the petrol filling station.

The Assistant Director Assets, Infrastructure and Regeneration responded to the issues raised and stated as follows:

- The Council had written to the Department for Transport following the scrutiny meeting seeking clarification on the requirements for markings and signage on such three lane roads. The Department had confirmed

Cabinet - 19.10.15

that the changes proposed in terms of the double solid white lines could not be made within the regulations. A copy of the letter would be provided to the Chair of the NCS Panel. The road layout and markings were therefore considered to meet all required design standards.

- Thames Valley Police had stated that they would not support the introduction of a banned right turn to the petrol station.
- A rigorous process of assessment of the safety of the scheme had been carried out, including a stage 3 safety audit. A majority of issues raised had been addressed. Officers had disagreed with some recommendations and responded accordingly.
- Police reported statistics indicated that there had been 10 accidents, 1 of which was serious, in the three years prior to the scheme being introduced. In the past 18 months there had been only 1 accident. The Chair of the Panel cited anecdotal evidence of a number of recent accidents that had either not been reported or were not included due to lag in producing the statistics.
- The scheme had been designed to improve journey times, particularly for buses as part of the Better Bus Fund. It was stated that the bus journey between Langley High Street and Sutton Lane was now five minutes quicker.

Commissioners asked the Assistant Director and the Chair of the NCS Panel a number of questions about the scheme including whether there was any evidence that any accidents had been caused by the new road layout. It was confirmed that the accident reported to the Police since the changes had not been due to the design. The Cabinet discussed the problems caused by parking on the highway, and agreed that the loading ban should be prioritised and implemented as soon as possible. The impact of reverting to two lanes or widening to four lanes was questioned. Reverting to two lanes would reduce capacity and require the DfT Better Bus Fund grant to be repaid. Widening had been explored but would be very expensive due to nearby utilities.

It was felt that driver behaviour was an important factor in the safety of the road and it was recognised this was a particular problem given the three lane road layout wasn't widely used in urban areas and there was a significant amount of non-local traffic using the route. The Cabinet agreed that Officers be asked to explore further options such as road markings, signage, enforcement, public information and possibly a reduction in the speed limit from 40mph to 30mph to further improve the scheme. Officers could implement appropriate further measures under delegated powers to make any improvements at the earliest opportunity.

At the conclusion of the discussion, it was agreed that the concerns of the NCS Panel be noted and the Chair of the Panel was thanked for the work scrutiny had undertaken on this issue. It was agreed that all planned works, including the loading ban, be implemented as soon as possible and that further options be explored and implemented where appropriate. The Cabinet agreed that a further report be provided to the NCS Scrutiny Panel in six months time and any outstanding concerns of the Panel could be referred back to Cabinet.

Real Time Passenger Information

The NCS Scrutiny Panel had been asked by the Cabinet in April 2015 to monitor progress in improving the accuracy and detection rates of the Real Time Passenger Information (RTPI) system for bus users. It was noted that detection rates had initially increased to 67%-69% in June but progress had slipped with a range of 62%-72% in the statistics reported to the September meeting. This fell short of the target set by Cabinet to move towards 100% for First bus services. Concerns were also raised by the Panel in relation to 'ghost buses' and the delays in RTPI displaying data for non-First services. The Panel had resolved as follows at its meeting on 3rd September 2015:

"That the matter should be referred to Cabinet, with specific reference to the issue of 'ghost buses'."

Officers informed the Cabinet of the reasons why the improvement in detection rates had stalled, which primarily related to delays in the upgrade programme, a fleet change by First and delays in transferring the RTPI kit onto the new buses. These issues would shortly be resolved and Officers were confident that detection rates would start to rise again.

The Cabinet shared the concerns of the Panel and expressed significant disappointment that the performance of the system had not met the target. Members were frustrated that First had not prioritised implementation of the RTPI technology when planning their fleet upgrade and ensure the operational arrangements were in place to continue the improvement in detection rates. RTPI should be delivering significant benefits to both passengers and First, and it was considered to be unacceptable that at least three in ten buses were not detected by the system. The Cabinet discussed whether there were any sanctions or other options available to the Council to ensure the system was used by First as intended. Commissioners asked the Assistant Director Assets, Infrastructure and Regeneration to write to First expressing this dissatisfaction and requiring them to take all necessary steps to move performance towards 100%.

Concern was also expressed that other services, such as the Transport for London services operating in Slough, were not yet included in the RTPI system. Commissioners were informed that the real time data was now being received by officers. This was being verified and a data link needed to be provided by Arvato before going live. The Cabinet agreed that this information be transmitted as soon as possible; that a firm start date be confirmed to the Commissioner for Social & Economic Inclusion.

During the discussion, the Cabinet recognised that technology had moved on considerably since the current RTPI system in Slough was introduced. It was therefore agreed that whilst the immediate priority was ensuring the current system worked properly for passengers, Officers were asked to undertake a fundamental review of the RTPI technology and the future options for Slough.

Resolved –

A4 Brands Hill

- (a) That the concerns of the Neighbourhoods & Community Services Scrutiny Panel regarding the planning, design and implementation of highway changes on the A4 at Brands Hill be noted. The Cabinet were satisfied that the proper processes had been followed to assess the safety of the scheme, including an independent safety audit, and that the design met all relevant Department for Transport standards and requirements.
- (b) That all outstanding planned works such as the loading ban be implemented as soon as possible.
- (c) That Officers investigate, and if appropriate implement, further measures including speed reductions, road markings and/or temporary signage, public information and enforcement, and report to the Neighbourhoods & Community Services Scrutiny Panel in six months.

Real Time Passenger Information

- (d) That the reference from the Neighbourhoods & Community Services Scrutiny Panel, and the response of Officers, in relation to continued concerns about the performance of Real Time Passenger Information for buses be noted.
- (e) That a letter be sent to First stating that the Cabinet considered current performance and detection rates to be unacceptable, and sought further commitment from First to take all necessary practical steps to move towards the 100% target.
- (f) That the data now being received by the Council from other bus operators in Slough be transmitted to the RTPI system at bus stops as soon as possible, and that the Commissioner for Social & Economic Inclusion be informed of the date of implementation.
- (g) That in addition to the steps to maximise the performance of the existing system, Officers undertake a fundamental review of the longer term technological options for Real Time Passenger Information in Slough.

50. Notification of Forthcoming Decisions

The Cabinet considered the most recently published Notification of Decisions which set out the forthcoming key decisions to be taken by Cabinet in the next three months. It was noted that the 'Trelawney Avenue Redevelopment Plan Update' report had been deferred until November 2015 and that positive progress was being made with partners to secure health provision on the site.

Cabinet - 19.10.15

Resolved – That the published Notification of Decisions for the period between October and December 2015 be endorsed.

51. Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the item in Part II of the agenda as it involved the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 the Schedule 12A the Local Government Act 1972.

Below is a summary of the decisions of the Cabinet taken during Part II of the agenda.

52. Part II Minutes - 14th September 2015

The Part II minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 14th September 2015 were approved.

53. Slough Drug & Alcohol Action Team (DAAT) Services Procurement - Appendix A

The Part II Appendix was noted and considered in determining matters in the Part I report without disclosing any exempt information.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.38 pm and closed at 7.45 pm)