

Cabinet – Meeting held on Monday, 14th March, 2016.

Present:- Councillors Anderson (Chair), Carter, Hussain, Parmar, Sharif (from 6.39pm) and Swindlehurst

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillors Brooker, Davis, M Holledge and N Holledge

Apologies for Absence:- Councillors Mann and Munawar

PART 1

97. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

98. Minutes of the Meeting held on 8th February 2016

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 8th February 2016 be approved as a correct record.

99. Five Year Plan Annual Report

A report was considered on the Five Year Plan Annual Report that set out progress made during the first year of the plan. Approval was sought to recommend the Annual Report, as set out at Appendix A to the report, to Council on 19th April 2016.

The Five Year Plan had been introduced in January 2015 and set a vision and series of outcomes against which the Council would prioritise its resources. The Plan would be reviewed annually and an Annual Report would be produced to summarise progress as it was recognised that it was important to demonstrate what had been achieved against the vision and each of the eight outcomes. A combination of case studies and performance indicators had therefore been used, which built upon the detailed quarterly updates to the Cabinet and Overview & Scrutiny Committee including the Corporate Balanced Scorecard.

(Councillor Sharif joined the meeting)

Commissioners welcomed the Annual Report which it was felt would be a useful tool to help explain the journey the Council was on in seeking to improve the lives of people in Slough at a time of significant financial pressures. The report was concise and written in plain English to ensure it was accessible. It highlighted very substantive and wide ranging activity undertaken such as 1,000 more pupils provided with a school place and the inspection of 1,600 private rented properties. Members emphasised that the Plan needed to keep moving forward with targets and actions set to deal with evolving and emerging issues.

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The Cabinet agreed to recommended the Annual Report to Council on 19th April 2016 and also placed on record their thanks to both staff and service users for their role in delivering the many achievements detailed in the report.

Recommended – That the Annual Report of progress during the first year of the Five Year Plan, attached as Appendix 'A' to the report, be approved.

100. Manifesto Update on Pledges 2015/16

A report was considered that informed the Cabinet of the activity and projects undertaken following adoption of the ruling group manifesto on 22nd June 2015.

The key achievements highlighted included 200 new social homes and the start of construction at the Ledgers Road site by Slough Urban Renewal; major improvements at Baylis Park; the adoption of the new Leisure Strategy including investment in new sports, leisure and ice facilities; and the installation of 86 more CCTV cameras across the borough. Commissioners were pleased that the vast majority of pledges made had already been fulfilled in the nine months since they were adopted. It was also stated that whilst the The Curve would not now be open during the municipal year, this was due to the decision to incorporate the Registrars service and ensure the flagship facility would be fully operational from opening. Other commitments such as Britwell regeneration were on track to be completed early.

A Commissioner commented that the major investment in transport schemes including the Burnham Station traffic scheme, Slough Mass Rapid Transit, A355 and A332 had also been progressed as promised, demonstrating a commitment to upgrading Slough's transport infrastructure and ensure the town continued to be a premier location for both business and residents. Construction of the community sports facility at Arbour Park would deliver the long standing pledge to provide a home for Slough Town Football Club.

In noting the report, the Cabinet welcomed the progress that has been made on each of the manifesto pledges.

Resolved – That the progress made to date on the projects undertaken as part of the commitment to the manifesto pledges adopted in June 2015 be noted.

101. Community Investment Fund Update 2015-16

The Cabinet discussed a report that summarised the key projects funded in 2015/16 from the Community Investment Fund. A draft list of proposed allocations for 2016/17 was also tabled and considered.

The fund had been established in 2012 to support relatively small, street level improvements. Projects had been undertaken across the Council during the

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year including new street nameplates, gateway signs, measures to tackle pavement parking and an extension of the cycle hire scheme. It was felt that good progress had been made.

The draft allocations totalling £500,000 were considered for 2016/17. Proposed investments included neighbourhood improvements identified on Member walkabouts, landscaping, green gyms and casework software. A contribution of £25,000 was also proposed for utility supplies for temporary ice facilities whilst the ice arena was closed for refurbishment, although it was recognised that significant further work was needed to find a viable interim solution.

After due consideration, the Cabinet agreed to note the update and agree the allocations for 2016/17 as set out in the tabled paper.

Resolved –

- (a) That the progress made to date on the community investment fund projects in 2015/16 be noted; and
- (b) That indicative allocations of the Community Investment Fund in 2016/17 be agreed as follows:

Total available Community Investment Fund - £500,000:

- £350k Ward walkabout projects and neighbourhood enhancements
- £25k Enabling measures for potential temporary ice arena provision - water and electricity connections to site
- £40k 3x Green Gyms for parks at various locations and play/exercise equipment
- £20k replacement shrubs/landscaping at various locations across Sloughs public realm including, but not limited to, parks, highway verges and established planted areas.
- £35k Verge protection measures – knee rails, double kerbs, bollards at various locations around the Borough
- £30k Towards improving casework enquiries and response services to residents

102. Procurement of Environmental Services Contract

A report was considered that requested Cabinet approval to commence procurement of contracts for future service provision for waste collection, waste services, waste management, waste treatment, public realm (street cleaning and green estate), highways reactive works, highways and transport capital works and professional services.

It was proposed to procure three separate contracts for the services:

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- Environmental services contract covering most waste services and public realm, noting the public realm strategy at Appendix A to the report;
- Infrastructure contract for highways engineering works and highways and transport capital works; and
- Professional services contract for highways and transport.

The option of contracting with a single strategic partner had been considered by the Contract Re-provision Board, however after detailed analysis including feedback from the soft market testing set out in Appendix B to the report, it was recommended that three separate contracts be procured. Approval was also sought to bring together all of the budgets for the services from 2016/17 under a single financial and strategic overview.

Commissioners asked a number of questions about the reasons for recommending three contract packages, the level of member engagement and work undertaken to learn lessons from previous major commission and procurements of other key Council services. The principle reason for three contracts was that the market had clearly indicated that a single contract could impede competitiveness and innovation and minimise flexibility and efficiencies.

Commissioners noted the feedback from the market testing, however, it was felt that the considerable overlap between services across the contracts meant there were potentially significant service and financial benefits from working with a single provider. It was therefore agreed not to preclude a single contractor for all services and requested that further consideration be given to the option of packaging contracts before agreeing the final specification. Approval was given to proceed with procurement process in principle, however, in recognising the scale and importance of the procurement of these services, Commissioners felt that the report was not sufficiently clear about the specification and therefore agreed that relevant Commissioners would be consulted and a further report would be brought to Cabinet at the next key stage of the procurement to finalise the specification. It was emphasised that it was critical to get the specification right at the outset of the contract and that if multiple providers were eventually successful than joined up ways of working must be found to deliver these important and highly visible services effectively.

The Public Realm Strategy was agreed and the aspiration as set out for Slough was welcomed. The Assistant Director of Procurement and Commercial Services was asked to clarify what the Cabinet were being asked to agree in recommendation (b) in relation to approving the "...completion of the commissioning process for the Environmental Services Contract" and it was confirmed that Commissioners were being asked to acknowledge the internal work done to date by the Public Realm, Environment, Transport and Highways sub-commissioning group, which was duly noted.

It was agreed that the opportunities to deliver wider benefits through the contracts, such as apprenticeships, should also be maximised where

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possible. The engagement with Members was discussed and it was agreed that the member engagement plan currently being developed would be circulated when it was available.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Council commence procurement of the Environmental Services contract, Infrastructure contract and Professional Services contract, noting the Cabinet's desire to keep open the option of a single contractor for all or multiple contracts.
- (b) That the Public Realm Strategy, attached at Appendix A to the report, and the completion of the commissioning process for the Environmental Services Contract be approved.
- (c) That the service budgets be brought together from 2016/17 following consultation with the relevant Commissioners.
- (d) That the Member Engagement Plan be circulated and that a further report be considered by the Cabinet at the next key milestone of the procurement process to finalise the shape and specification of the contract(s).

103. Welfare Policies

The Cabinet were asked to approve the revised policy in relation to Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP) for 2016-17 as attached at Appendix A to the report.

The payments were awarded to provide further financial assistance, outside of Housing Benefit and Universal Credit regulations, to help people meet their housing costs. Demand was increasing as a result of benefit reforms. Payments made in line with the policy were funded from the government grant allocation, which had risen £151k for 2016/17 to £581k. It was intended that spend would remain in line with this grant allocation to avoid further pressure on the Council's General Fund budget. The proposed changes to the policy for 2016-17 were summarised as in paragraph 5.10 of the report.

Members asked a number of questions about the number of recipients locally and discussed the impacts of the government's welfare reforms, particularly in the context of rising rents and property values. It was recognised that as a one off payment, DHP could only provide short term assistance and recipients whose circumstances further deteriorated would likely increase demand pressures on other services for vulnerable people. The widening of Universal Credit and changes to the benefit cap were also likely to increase demand for hardship support. It was therefore agreed that the policy be approved and that the Cabinet receive an update report in six months that included detail on the profile of recipients and emerging trends arising from housing pressures and benefit reform.

Resolved –

- (a) That the policy for Discretionary Housing Payments, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved.
- (b) That a progress report be received by the Cabinet in six months to set out the level of demand for assistance and consider the impact of welfare reforms.

104. Trelawney Avenue Redevelopment Plan - Progress Report

A progress report was received that updated the Cabinet on the continued positive progress in the delivery of the Trelawney Avenue Redevelopment Plan that included a community hub and new housing.

It was envisaged that the hub would have housing, healthcare, library and adult social care services, plus flexible space for voluntary and community based use. There would also be some space at the hub for Thames Valley Police and discussions were ongoing about their specific requirements. Commissioners welcomed the fact that Slough Clinical Commissioning Group had obtained outline support from NHS England to move an existing practice into the new hub and work in an integrated way with other public services. The Council were also working with Raw Investments Limited and the site plan included provision a mixture of 1 and 2 bedroomed flats and a 2 bedroomed house. The approach being taken was to realise the One Public Estate objectives, improving services whilst minimising running costs.

The Cabinet was pleased that the significant work put in to the plan was now progressing well in line with the original aims of the redevelopment and using the good practice of hubs developed elsewhere in the borough. The progress was noted and approval was given to the land appropriation detailed in recommendation (j). Enablement works were scheduled to commence by April 2016 and business cases would be progressed by the CCG and Council respectively with a final report scheduled to come to Cabinet in June 2016.

Resolved –

- (a) That it be noted that since the last cabinet report Slough Clinical Commissioning Group (“SCCG”) had obtained outline support from NHS England and would submit a final Business Case for approval in April 2016.
- (b) That it be noted that the proposals for the hub had evolved and now included the potential to build on the strengths of the community centres in Slough, through joint team and agency working and the application of an asset based model of delivering public services that is aligned to the Council’s “Enabling & Preventing” theme of the 5 year plan.
- (c) That it be noted that the outline plans included the introduction of up to 16 properties for rent. Of these, no less than 50% would be owned by SBC, with the remainder owned by Raw Investments Ltd (“RIL”).

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- (d) That it be noted that the preferred development solution that met the strategic needs of the Council, SCCG and Raw Investments Limited (“RIL”) is for the hub to be jointly owned and managed between RIL and the Council. RIL would have ownership of the health-led area and properties above, with the remainder owned by the Council (General Fund).
- (e) That it be noted that the scheme enablement be scheduled to commence by the end of April 2016 through the demolition of the Merry Makers PH (with attached hall) and 324 Trelawney Avenue.
- (f) That it be noted that Housing Services had commenced consultation with tenants residing in 313-323 Trelawney Avenue regarding their relocation.
- (g) That it be noted that Asset Management would continue to explore the feasibility of relocating the football teams currently based at the Merry Makers PH to a formal lease/licence of the changing rooms at Kedermister Park.
- (h) That it be noted that Thames Valley Police (TVP) had now confirmed they require touch down space at the hub and that discussions have commenced with regards finalising their requirements and the surrender of their lease of Langley Police Station.
- (i) That subject to NHS England approving the business case submitted by SCCG, a final report containing the full business case to proceed with the proposed redevelopment be presented to Cabinet in June 2016.
- (j) That subject to compliance with Housing Revenue Account (“HRA”) guidance, it be agreed in principle that the General Fund (“GF”) appropriate the area of land required from the HRA to develop the hub, with the remainder of the site retained by the HRA and used to build affordable housing for rent .

105. Cippenham Community Centre Extension

A report was considered on a proposal to extend the existing Cippenham Community Centre on Earls Lane to provide changing room facilities and additional community space. The rear of the Community Centre would also be opened up to provide outdoor facilities and direct access to Cippenham Village Green by bridging the stream. There was also potential to allow the relocation of the 2nd Cippenham Scouts from their current location. The Council was seeking to demolish Maria Cowland Hall, which was in a poor state of repair, and redevelop the site for housing development, subject to planning, with the community space re-provided at the Community Centre. A correction was noted to paragraph 5.14 of the report that notice to Age Concern had been served to vacate Maria Cowland Hall by December 2016, with attempts to find alternative venues for their activity. The budget provision

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had been made for the proposals in the Capital Programme approved by Council in February 2016.

The Cabinet welcomed the concept and discussed a number of aspects of the proposal including the benefits of the new facilities provided by the extension and bringing together local communities by bridging the stream. Councillors Davis and Nora Holledge addressed the Cabinet as local ward Members and suggested how the new facilities could be used to maximise activity such as cricket on the green. Commissioners commented that the detailed design and service specification of the extension would need to consider how best to meet the local need and uses. More generally, the Cabinet discussed whether the proposal maximised the use of the site and it was noted that the scheme met current and anticipated future need but there could be further development at a later stage for other services or facilities if there was a business case.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Cabinet noted the report and welcomed the proposal in principle. It was agreed to consider a further report with the full business case in June 2016.

Resolved –

- (a) That it be noted that the current proposal for the introduction of changing facilities at Cippenham Village Green was to extend the existing Cippenham Community Centre.
- (b) That subject to approval, it be noted that the extension would include a set of changing rooms, facing onto Cippenham Village Green, new community space part of which could provide a new location for 2nd Cippenham Scouts and the remainder likely to be for a Nursery operator or other.
- (c) That should agreement be reached with 2nd Cippenham Scouts for their relocation, the extension could allow for the existing Scout Hut to be demolished and the site to be remediated into Cippenham Village Green. The remediation would include a new car park serving users of the Village Green.
- (d) That a report with a full business case would be presented to Cabinet in June 2016.

106. The Old Library Site - Development Proposals

An initial report was considered on proposals for the development of the library site, seeking to establish the timing of the full business case for a mixed-use development, which would include proposals for a quality branded hotel. Authority was also sought to negotiate and complete an associated, preparatory land transaction involving the surrender by the Council's tenants of their lease of Burlington Road car park and the grant to them of a new lease of a smaller part of the site, but for a longer term.

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The Council owned the site and work was underway to develop a full masterplan and business case to maximise the potential of the key site when services moved across to The Curve. The Cabinet welcomed the work that had been done to have a clear plan in place for the future use of the site and commented that a strong proposal would complement the range of other major scheme underway and planned for the town centre. It was agreed to receive a further report in June 2016 on the business case for the proposal and it was also agreed to delegate authority to resolve the lease issues for part of the Burlington Road car park.

Resolved –

- (a) That a follow-up report would be presented to Cabinet for consideration in June 2016 which would be accompanied by a full business case to support the redevelopment of the Old Library site;
- (b) That delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director - Assets, Infrastructure & Regeneration, following consultation with the relevant Cabinet member, to negotiate and complete an agreement for the surrender of the existing lease of and for the grant of a new lease of part of Burlington Road car park outlined in red in the plan (Appendix A to the report).; and
- (c) That the procurement of the surrender of the lease of Burlington Road car park is for the benefit, improvement or development of the Council's area.

107. Proposed Disposal of Land at Wexham Nursery to Slough Regeneration Partnership

A report was considered on the disposal of Slough Borough Council land at Wexham Nursery to the Slough Regeneration Partnership (SRP) to commence a 104 unit housing development. In resolving the matters in Part I of the agenda, the Cabinet considered the Part II Appendix 1, the contents of which was noted.

The housing development would provide 70 homes for sale and 34 for social rent to be acquired by the Council. Approval was sought to authorise the disposal of the land the SRP for a sum that represented no less than the best value valuation and to delegate authority to agree the final valuation sum. The Cabinet considered the valuation set out the Part II Appendix 1 and discussed a number of aspects of the development and working arrangements between the Council and Morgan Sindall. The disposal and delegations were then agreed.

Resolved –

- (a) That the disposal of land at Wexham Nursery to SRP be authorised for a sum that represents no less than the best value valuation, if the option granted in respect of the land is exercised.

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- (b) That delegated authority to agree the final valuation sum be given to the Assistant Director, Assets Infrastructure & Regeneration, following consultation with the Leader and the Council's section 151 officer; and
- (c) That delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director Assets, Infrastructure and Regeneration, following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Neighbourhoods & Renewal, to approve the non-financial terms for disposal.

108. Small Sites Development Strategy Update

The Cabinet received a follow up to the report considered in September 2015 on the progress of developing Slough Borough Council owned smaller sites. It had been agreed to deliver the package of sites through the Slough Regeneration Partnership and the report provided an update on progress in bringing forward sites.

A pilot HRA site at Eschle Court would be on site by May 2016 to provide 11 social rented flats and the first batch of four HRA project were scheduled to start on site by October 2016. Further developments were in the pipeline as detailed in Appendix One, which contained exempt information and was noted during Part I of the meeting without disclosing any exempt information.

The development of smaller, infill sites was recognised as being important in improving local neighbourhoods as well as providing additional housing. The Cabinet welcomed the positive progress in working through the SRP to bring forward both major sites such as Wexham Nursery and the smaller, more difficult sites as detailed in the report. More generally, the Cabinet commented on wide range of schemes now moving forward to delivery via the Slough Regeneration Partnership which demonstrated that the hard work in the early stages of establishing the complex joint venture was now achieving significant regeneration of housing, leisure and community benefits across the borough. At the conclusion of the discussion, the Cabinet noted the report and agreed the recommendations.

Resolved –

- (a) That it be noted that the pilot HRA scheme at Eschle Court would be on site by May 2016 and would provide 11 social rented flats by March 2017.
- (b) That the first batch of four HRA projects, which included a combination of new build and refurbished HRA properties, would be on site by October 2016 and would provide 5 new homes, including a specially adapted wheelchair bungalow.
- (c) That subject to planning approval, the second batch of new homes, which would include 24 properties for sale and 19 specialist apartments for rent for adults with learning difficulties, would be on site before December 2016.

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- (d) That the Assistant Director Procurement & Commercial Services be given delegated authority to market test and remove any of the small (2 units or less) HRA sites that do not have signed build contracts in place and promote them through the Repair Maintenance and Investment (RMI) procurement process if they deem that this approach will generate best value for the Council.
- (e) That a progress report, providing an update on additional small General Fund sites, would be presented to Cabinet for consideration by Cabinet in September 2016.

109. Strategic Asset Purchases 2015/16

The Cabinet received an update on the Strategic Asset Purchases made under the Strategic Acquisition Strategy which had been approved by Cabinet and Council in September 2015. The Strategy provided up to £25m for the acquisition of strategic assets in line with the agreed criteria.

The Strategy had enabled the council to respond more quickly and commercially to opportunities and two acquisitions for three properties had been made so far under the scheme. These investments were anticipated to generate income in excess of £550,000 per annum and the council was working towards achieving the income target of £1.25m in 2016/17. Details of the assets purchased were included in the Part II Appendix to the report which was noted without disclosing any exempt information.

The Cabinet discussed the income target for the year and officers were confident it could be achieved with a number of other opportunities to acquire further assets in the pipeline. Commissioners noted the report and suggested several other sites that the Strategic Acquisition Board could consider.

Resolved – That it be noted that:

- (a) The ability to operate within commercial timescales had been very effective. Two major strategic asset purchases have already been completed, generating income in excess of £550,000 of per annum.
- (b) A mixed portfolio of potential strategic asset purchases has been identified and is being pursued.
- (c) An income target of £1.25m had been set for the financial year 2016/17.
- (d) The income generated from strategic asset purchases would generate an independent income stream that will alleviate pressure enforced by central government funding cuts.

110. References from Overview & Scrutiny

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The Cabinet considered the reference from the Neighbourhoods & Community Services Scrutiny Panel meeting on 23rd February 2016 asking it to note the Panel's view on the Littering Project. The Cabinet noted the decision of the Panel to support the extension of the pilot and that the decision would be made under delegated authority, taking the Panel's view into account.

Resolved – That the Neighbourhoods and Community Services Scrutiny Panel's support for the extension of the pilot of the littering enforcement project in to Phase 2 for a further 6 months from the 1st April 2016 be noted.

111. Notification of Forthcoming Decisions

Resolved – That the published Notification of Decisions be endorsed.

112. 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 matters resolved during Part II of the agenda.

113. Proposed Disposal of Land at Wexham Nursery to Slough Regeneration Partnership - Appendix 1

The Cabinet noted the Part II Appendix to the report, detailing the independent valuation.

114. Small Sites Development Strategy - Appendices

The Part II Appendices, including the Current Pipeline of Small Sites and Current Programme for the Small Sites Development Strategy were noted.

115. Strategic Asset Purchases 2015/16 - Appendices

The Part II Appendices which detailed the two assets purchased under the Strategic Acquisition Strategy was noted.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.34 pm and closed at 8.29 pm)