

Cabinet – Meeting held on Monday, 11th April, 2016.

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

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillor Strutton (minutes 116-118 inclusive)

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor Sharif

PART 1

116. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

117. Minutes of the Meeting held on 14th March 2016

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 14th March 2016 be approved as a correct record.

With the agreement of the Cabinet, the Chair varied the order of the agenda to consider item 4 – Pledge to Slough's Looked After Children first.

118. Pledge to Slough's Looked After Children

The Cabinet considered a report that sought approval to recommend endorsement of a new Pledge to Slough's Looked After Children to full Council on 19th April 2016.

The Interim Director of Children's Services and Chief Executive of Slough Children's Services Trust explained the purpose and concept of the Pledge which set out the promises to looked after children in Slough. It was noted that the detailed implementation of the promises would be set out more fully in the Corporate Parenting Strategy, Action Plan and scorecard that were due to come to Cabinet in the summer. A young person representing the Reach Out group, who had played a leading role in the development of the Pledge, summarised some of the key elements contained in the nineteen promises which covered social care, health, education and housing. The promises had been developed following extensive consultation with young people and had also been endorsed by the Corporate Parenting Panel.

The Cabinet welcomed the principle of the Pledge and particularly the higher level of aspiration it would set in terms of improving the outcomes for looked after children. The involvement of young people in the development of the promises was very positive and would ensure that they reflected their priorities. Commissioners emphasised the importance of ensuring that the promises could and would be kept and asked a number of questions about how this could be assured. It was recognised that the improvement of children's services in Slough was ongoing and that some of the promises

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were aspirational and would take some time to achieve. However, the Pledge set out a clear direction to work towards and would be taken forward by the development of the Corporate Parenting Strategy. The commitments had to be owned and delivered jointly between the Council and the Trust as there were actions for both organisations. Commissioners all agreed that adopting the Pledge was an important step forward in articulating the specific commitments the Council and Trust were making to looked after children and it provided a clear platform from which to move forward. Speaking under Procedure Rule 30, Councillor Strutton, a member of the Corporate Parenting Panel, also expressed his support for the Pledge and importance of accelerating improvement in children's services in Slough.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Cabinet agreed to recommend endorsement of the Pledge to full Council on 19th April and agreed to consider a report on the Corporate Parenting Strategy in June or July 2016.

Recommended –

That the revised Pledge setting out the promises to Slough's Looked After Children be endorsed.

Resolved –

That a report be considered in the summer of 2016 on the Corporate Parenting Strategy and Action Plan to support the delivery of the Pledge.

119. Local Authority Partnership Purchase Scheme (LAPP) Update

A report was considered that updated the Cabinet on the progress on implementing the Local Authority Partnership Purchase (LAPP) scheme which was designed to help people purchase a property in Slough on the open market with the assistance of the Council.

The adoption of such a scheme was agreed by Cabinet and the Council in September 2015 and a total of £9.5m over two years had been allocated in the Capital Strategy. It was envisaged that the investment would deliver financial benefits to the Council as well as help people, including key workers, own their own home and relieve some of the pressures in the private rented sector. Significant progress had been made to implement the scheme and three financial institutions had committed to the scheme – TSB, Halifax and Nationwide Building Society. It was anticipated that the scheme would be open to applications from late May/early June for a restricted period to gauge the level of interest and the process would be reviewed accordingly after ten successful applications. The Cabinet welcomed the progress that had been made and looked forward to the scheme helping people get onto the housing ladder.

Resolved –

- (a) That the progress made in the implementation of the Local Authority Partnership Purchase Scheme be noted.
- (b) That the scoring mechanism for applicants included at Appendix A to the report be noted.

120. SEN and PRU Expansion Programme: Phase 1

The Cabinet considered a report on the potential options for the expansion of Special Education Needs (SEN) and Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) provision to address present and future demand for such places. The report published in the supplementary agenda did not include any exempt information (as had been envisaged when the report was marked 'to follow' when the agenda was published) and it was therefore moved to Part I of the agenda.

As the school population in Slough continued to increase there would be a further need for more SEN and PRU places in addition to the existing shortfall currently being met by over-occupation and out of borough placements. Forecasts showed a growth in demand of 278 SEN and PRU places by 2022. Work was underway to explore the short, medium and long term options to meet the demand for places and further reports would come to future Cabinet meetings. In the interim, a number of recommendations were made on the first phase to meet the short term need by utilising the Thomas Grey Centre buildings to provide additional places by disposing of the part of the building formerly occupied by the Milan Centre to Littledown School on a 125 year Academy lease and to lease the remainder of the Thomas Grey building to Haybrook College for three years pending a suitable long term solution being implemented.

The Cabinet considered the financial implications, options appraisal and evaluation criteria of the proposal and recognised the benefits of both providing much needed additional places in the short term and helping to reduce the financial pressure of placing pupils out of borough. After due consideration, the recommendations were agreed.

Resolved –

- (a) That the former Milan Centre building be disposed to Littledown School under a standard Academy 125 lease to create at least 15 new SEN places.
- (b) That delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director, Assets Infrastructure & Regeneration to agree the final valuation sum following consultation with the Leader, the Commissioner for Education & Children and the Council's section 151 officer.

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- (c) That the Thomas Grey Centre be leased to Haybrook College to create additional capacity from September 2016 at a cost of £35K per annum for 3 years until a permanent solution is built;
- (d) That the former Milan Centre purchase by Littledown, the conversion and refurbishment works in the Thomas Grey Centre buildings be funded using Basic Need grant funding.

121. Contracts in Excess of £250,000 in 2016/17

The Cabinet considered a report detailing the contracts with an estimated value of over £250,000 that were proposed to be let in the 2016/17 financial year and exemptions to competitive tendering. A further list of contracts was included in an addendum to the report and these were tabled and considered.

The contracts listed in Appendix A to the report and the Addendum were included in approved budgets and all contracts would be let in accordance with the Financial Procedure Rules. After due consideration, the Cabinet endorsed the list of contracts.

Resolved – That the list of contracts for 2016/17 be endorsed, as attached at Appendix A to the report and in the tabled Addendum.

122. References from Overview & Scrutiny

There were no references from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee or Panels.

123. Notification of Forthcoming Decisions

Resolved – That the published Notification of Decisions be endorsed.

124. 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.

125. Part II Minutes - 14th March 2016

The minutes of the Part II meeting of the Cabinet held on 14th March 2016 were approved as a correct record.

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126. Maple House - Proposed Lease Surrender & Renewal

The Cabinet agreed to delegate authority to the Assistant Director Assets, Infrastructure and Regeneration to agree terms for the proposed lease surrender and renewal of Maple House, Slough.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.34 pm and closed at 7.15 pm)