

Cabinet – Meeting held on Monday, 20th March, 2017.

Present:- Councillors Munawar (Chair), Hussain (Vice-Chair), Ajaib, Matloob, Sharif and Sohal

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillors Strutton, A Sandhu and Wright

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor Bal

PART 1

116. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

117. Minutes of the Meeting held on 6th February 2017

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6th February 2017 be approved as a correct record.

118. Financial Report - Month 10 2016/17

The Assistant Director Finance & Audit introduced a report that updated the Cabinet on the latest forecast financial information to the end of January 2017 and sought approval for the write offs requests detailed in section 9 of the report.

The forecast overspend had been reduced by 50% on the previous month to £0.418m. Pressures on the adult social care budget, primarily the increasing levels of care for existing clients, meant the overspend for the Wellbeing directorate was £0.859k. Work was ongoing to continue to reduce the overspend and achieve a breakeven position by year end. It was forecast that 89% of the total capital programme would be delivered by the end of the year. There was no change to the previously reported position on the Housing Revenue Account with a forecast surplus on £0.396m.

Commissioners considered the position regarding write offs and it was noted that a net total of £0.228m had been written back into the accounts during the period.

After due consideration, the Cabinet noted the latest forecast financial information and agreed to approve the write-off transactions as detailed in paragraph 9 of the report.

Resolved –

(a) That the latest financial forecast and the ongoing work by departments to reduce the over spend be noted.

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(b) That the write offs listed in paragraph 9 of the report be approved.

119. Performance and Projects Report: Q3 2016-17

The Assistant Director Finance & Audit introduced a report that provided the Cabinet with the latest performance information, balanced scorecard indicators and project updates for the third quarter of 2016-17.

The balanced scorecard had been refreshed to set out a range of high priority performance indicators under the new Five Year Plan outcomes. Commissioners discussed the work being undertaken to address the three outcome measures rated 'red', which related to childhood obesity and crime rates. It was noted that whilst overall crime had risen in Slough, the rate of increase was lower than comparative places and violent crime locally had fallen by 10% during the reporting period. The Council Tax collection rate was slightly below the profiled target and resources had been reallocated to address the issue.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Cabinet noted the report and welcomed the more streamlined and focused format.

Resolved – That the Council's current performance as measured by the indicators within the balanced scorecard and update on Gold projects and performance be noted.

120. SEN and PRU Expansion Needs and Proposals - Next Phase

The Commissioner for Education and Children's Services and the Interim Director of Children's Services introduced a report on the demand for Special Educational Needs (SEN) and Pupil Referral Unit (PRU) places, which sought approval for the capital funding to undertake the next phase of projects to create 203 new SEN and PRU places over 3 years.

The key proposals were summarised which included 100 more places through the expansion of Haybrook College; the relocation of services from the Rotunda building to the Thomas Grey Building; the appropriation of land at the former Rotunda site on Belfast Avenue to the Housing Revenue Account; the development of a hospitality and catering facility with Haybrook College on the Haymill site; and the allocation of capital to build new SEN units at Priory School and Marish Academy and a new annex of the current Arbour Vale School site. The Cabinet recognised that the provision of additional places was important both to meet rising demand as the school population increased and to reduce placement and transport costs of out of borough placements.

(Councillor Sohal left the meeting)

Speaking under Rule 30, Councillors Wright and Strutton welcomed the proposals for Haybrook College, and the increase in much needed SEN provision more generally, however, concern was expressed about the adequacy of the access road and the maintenance of the boundaries of the

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site. The importance of ensuring the site was safe and secure for both educational users and local residents was emphasised. The Commissioner and Officers acknowledged the practical issues raised by the Ward Members and indicated that they would be taken on board as the detailed plans were progressed.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Cabinet agreed the recommendations as set out in the report.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Thomas Grey building be disposed to Haybrook College under a standard Academy 125 lease to relocate and expand the Key Stage 3 facility currently housed in the Rotunda building.
- (b) That a budget of £1.2m be allocated for the refurbishment of the Thomas Grey building, including a new replacement heating system and roof upgrade which also improves buildings now leased to Littledown School.
- (c) That the former Rotunda site on Belfast Ave be appropriated from the General Fund (Education) to the HRA for a sum to be determined by the District Valuer.
- (d) That around 33% of the vacant Haymill site be disposed to Haybrook College under a standard Academy 125 lease at a peppercorn rent and allocate £3.6m of capital funding to build a small extension and a new Hospitality and Catering facility that will add up to 10 additional SEN places and 40 additional PRU places.
- (e) That £13m be allocated to build the new SEN units at Priory School and Marish Academy and to build a new annex on the current Arbour Vale School site, with all 3 projects being delivered by Slough Urban Renewal.
- (f) That £150k be invested for further refurbishment works at 323 High Street as part of the lease arrangements with Haybrook College, which will be for a 9 year period with a rental income of £35k per annum.
- (g) That the refurbishment works in the Thomas Grey building, the extension and the Hospitality and Catering facility for Haybrook College, Priory SEN unit, Marish SEN unit and Arbour Vale annex using £8.25m of Basic Need grant funding and £10.5m of council borrowing be agreed.
- (h) That the St Anthony's field (held in the General Fund for Education) be appropriated to the HRA and in return agree to dispose of the land in front of Arbour Vale School (from the HRA) to facilitate the expansion of Arbour Vale School.

121. Redevelopment of Old Library Site

The Commissioner for Housing & Urban Renewal introduced a report that updated the Cabinet on the progress made since September 2016 on the redevelopment of the Old Library Site into a mixed use development including two hotels, restaurant and residential scheme. Approval was sought for a number of decisions and delegations to make further progress.

Appendix One, financial summary – hotels, and Appendix Two, Financial Comparison, contained exempt information and were considered in resolving the matters in Part I of the agenda without disclosing any of the exempt information. The Cabinet was informed that Appendix Three, the SUR Site Development Plan, had been marked to follow, however, it was reported that the document was not yet finalised and recommendation (f) was therefore amended to provide delegated authority to the Interim Chief Executive to approve the Plan, following consultation with the Commissioner for Housing & Urban Renewal.

The Cabinet welcomed the progress that had been made and was satisfied that the business case was sound. The scheme would provide a solid long term revenue stream that covered the cost of borrowing; a capital asset to the Council in a prime location; and the creation of a high quality development including two new hotels in the town centre. After considering various matters including the terms of the lease and position of other parties regarding the legal agreements, the Cabinet agreed the recommendations as set out in the report and, in relation to recommendation (f), delegated approval of the Site Development Plan to the Interim Chief Executive.

Resolved –

Hotel Element

- (a) That the updated financial report contained in Appendix One to the report, which updated Cabinet members on costs, income and payback be approved.
- (b) That delegated authority be given to the Interim Chief Executive or nominated deputy, acting following consultation with the s151 Officer and the Leader and Commissioner for Housing and Urban Renewal, to:
 - i. Agree and enter into an Agreement for Lease with landlord's works obligations and subsequent Lease of part of the Old Library Site for a 25-year lease term with a hotel operator for the two hotels, noting that this term could be extended to 40 years to match the offer from the hotel operator;
 - ii. Agree and, where the Council is a party, enter into the additional legal agreements set out in sections 5.15 and 5.16 of this report and any other ancillary agreements required to give effect to the redevelopment proposals for the site;

- iii. Consider whether to appropriate to planning purposes the Council-owned land required for the development which is currently held by the Council for other purposes and, if he considers it appropriate to do so, to effect the appropriation of such land to planning purposes subject to complying with the statutory procedures for such appropriation;
- iv. Take any other necessary actions, acting in the best interests of the Council, in order to enable the redevelopment of this element of the site for hotel use as set out in this report.

Residential Element

- (c) That the disposal of part of the OLS to SUR to develop the residential/ restaurant element of the overall project be authorised for a valuation sum that represents no less than the best consideration reasonably obtainable.
- (d) That delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director, Assets Infrastructure & Regeneration or nominated deputy following consultation with the Leader and the Council's section 151 officer to:
 - i. Agree the final valuation sum.
 - ii. Consider whether to appropriate to planning purposes the Council-owned land required for the development which is currently held by the Council for other purposes and, if he considers it appropriate to do so, to effect the appropriation of such land to planning purposes subject to complying with the statutory procedures for such appropriation;
- (e) That delegated authority be given to the Assistant Director Assets, Infrastructure and Regeneration following consultation with the Cabinet Member for Housing & Urban Renewal to:
 - i. Approve all non-financial terms for disposal.
 - ii. Agree and, where the Council is a party, enter into the additional legal agreements referred to in sections 5.15 and 5.16 of this report and any other ancillary agreements, required to give effect to the redevelopment proposals for this element of the site and take all necessary any other necessary actions, acting in the best interests of the council, to give effect to the proposals.

Partnership Business Plan

- (f) That delegated authority be given to the Interim Chief Executive, following consultation with the Leader of the Council and the Commissioner for Housing & Urban Renewal, to approve the Site Development Plan for the redevelopment of the Old Library Site prepared by SUR.

122. Tuns Lane Regeneration Project

The Commissioner for Housing & Urban Renewal introduced a report that sought approval for the Council to support Michael Shanly Homes (MSH) and the Royal Berkshire Fire & Rescue Authority by using Compulsory Purchase Order (CPO) powers on regeneration grounds to complete the site assembly for a mixed use scheme on a key gateway site.

The Assistant Director Assets, Infrastructure & Regeneration read a statement sent on behalf of the Fire Authority clarifying that Officers of the authority had entered into informal discussions with MSH and the Council about scheme, but there was no formal partnership in place with MSH, and that any potential agreement would be subject to the appropriate governance arrangements of the authority. The Cabinet noted the statement in full, although it was considered that the clarification did not materially effect the recommendations being put to Cabinet to agree the delegations necessary to proceed with a CPO if the scheme progressed in the interests of all parties.

The Cabinet recognised the strategic importance of the site and the opportunity to create a new or refurbished fire station as part of the overall development, if agreement could be reached between MSH and the Fire Authority. It was emphasised that the Council's role in the scheme at the present time was in a supporting capacity in terms of land assembly, however, other options could be pursued in the future if MSH and the Fire Authority were unable to bring forward a scheme.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Cabinet agreed the recommendations as set out in the report, noting the clarification from the Fire Authority about the current status of their discussions with MSH.

Resolved –

- (a) That it be noted that the delivery of this project, which fulfils several One Public Estate objectives, has been identified as a priority at a corporate management level.
- (b) That delegated authority be given to the Interim Strategic Director of Regeneration, Housing and Resources (or their successor) to enter into a Compulsory Purchase Order Indemnity Agreement (CPOIA) and if necessary, a development agreement with MSH (and any other relevant third party) prior to undertaking any preparatory works in respect of the CPO.
- (c) That the Interim Strategic Director of Regeneration, Housing and Resources (or their successor) be authorised to take all necessary steps to secure the making, submission, confirmation and implementation of a CPO to acquire any third party proprietary interests within the Slough Fire Station Area site (as at Appendix 1 to the report)

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- (d) That the Interim Strategic Director Regeneration, Housing and Resources be authorised to issue all relevant notices and certificates in connection with the making, confirmation and implementation of any CPO.
- (e) That the Interim Strategic Director of Regeneration, Housing and Resources be authorised to acquire third party proprietary interests by private treaty negotiation.
- (f) That the Interim Strategic Director of Regeneration, Housing and Resources be authorised to dispose of any third party proprietary interests acquired pursuant to the CPO to MSH in accordance with terms to be agreed.
- (g) That the Interim Strategic Director of Regeneration, Housing and Resources be authorised to make General Vesting Declarations (GVDs) under the Compulsory Purchase (Vesting Declarations) Act 1981 and/or to serve notices to treat and notices of entry (if required) following confirmation of a CPO by the Secretary of State;
- (h) That the Interim Strategic Director of Regeneration, Housing and Resources be authorised to issue and serve any warrants to obtain possession of property acquired by the Council following the execution of a GVD or service of a notice of entry if it was considered appropriate to do so.
- (i) That delegated authority be given to the Interim Strategic Director of Housing, Regeneration and Resources to work with MSH and the Royal Berkshire Fire Authority to facilitate the regeneration of this gateway site.

123. Housing Options Appraisal Update

The Commissioner for Housing & Urban Renewal introduced a report that provided an update on the Housing Option Appraisal following consultation with the Residents Board and other groups and taking into account the opportunities for innovation in respect of managing the housing stock. The work undertaken to date had led to the recommendation to narrow the options by excluding 'do nothing' and large scale stock transfer from further consideration.

The Head of Neighbourhood Services explained the reasons why the two options were recommended not to be progressed. Stock transfer had been discounted following analysis by Savills that indicated that it would leave a substantial overhanging debt and have a negative impact on the General Fund. The 'do nothing' option would not enable the Council to realistically meet the demand for homes and wider strategic housing aspirations. The Cabinet therefore agreed that excluding these two options would allow greater focus on the other options. A further report would be received by Cabinet in December 2017 following phase 2 of the appraisal work.

Resolved –

- (a) That the following recommendations from the Commissioning Consultative Group be endorsed, for the reasons set out in paragraphs 5.4 and 5.5 of the report –
- The option to 'do nothing' is not accepted; and that
 - The option of Large Scale stock transfer is not to be progressed further
- (b) All other options are to be considered and reviewed by the Commissioning Consultative Group, chaired by Cllr Ajaib, Commissioner for Housing and Urban Renewal, and Resident Consultative Group with final recommendations being brought to Cabinet in December 2017.

124. Procurement of Fleet for Environmental Services Local Authority Controlled Company (LACC)

The Commissioner for Highways & Transport and the Interim Chief Executive introduced a report that sought approval for the approach to procure the Local Authority Controlled Company (LACC) vehicles, plant and supporting components to enable the organisation to deliver Environmental Services from 1st December 2017.

The procurement of such vehicles, plant and other equipment was an important part of the insourcing of Environmental Services agreed by the Cabinet in September 2016. An options appraisal had been undertaken and the current Amey fleet was not viable due to the age of the assets. The procurement of new fleet and equipment would therefore provide opportunities for both service and environmental benefits upon transfer of the services to the new company later this year.

Commissioners asked a number of questions about the fleet, procurement and timetable. It was agreed that it was important to progress this important part of the insourcing to enable the services to be operated effectively by the LACC on the agreed timescale. The recommendations were therefore approved.

Resolved –

- (a) That officers be instructed to commence the procurement of vehicles, plant and supporting components for the new LACC.
- (b) That the Council's approach to the procurement of vehicles, plant and supporting components for the LACC be approved.
- (c) That delegated authority be provided to the Head of Paid Services to enable the award of contracts to be given following due process by Corporate Procurement and contract(s) award in accordance with Framework(s) rules.

125. Welfare Policies

The Assistant Director Finance & Audit introduced a report seeking approval for revised Council policies for 2017-18 for Discretionary Housing Payments and Local Welfare Provision. The schemes were important in providing additional support, particularly for people affected by welfare reforms.

Discretionary Housing Payments were funded by central Government and after several years of reduced funding there would be an additional £180,000 allocated to Slough in the next financial year bringing the total available to £761,000. The Council would continue to maintain spend within the respective budget. Local Welfare provision was a discretionary scheme funded by the Council and £300,000 had been allocated for 2017-18. The scheme had had 1,520 successful applications in the current year, helping people in a range of ways such as essential food and utility supplies.

After due consideration, the Discretionary Housing Payments and Local Welfare Provision policies for 2017-18 were approved.

Resolved –

- (a) That the policy for Discretionary Housing Payments as set out in Appendix A to the report be approved.
- (b) That the policy set out for Local Welfare Provision as set out in Appendix B to the report be approved.

126. Statutory Equality Objectives

A report was considered that sought approval of the 2017-2021 Equality Objectives in accordance with the Public Sector Equality Duty under the Equality Act 2010.

It was a statutory requirement for the authority to publish quality objectives every four years and Council had developed the priorities set out in Appendix A to the report to reflect Members' vision to improve choice and equality of opportunity for all residents; to be people focused; and to support the most vulnerable.

The Cabinet recognised the importance of agreeing the objectives and embedding them into the strategies, policies and wider service delivery across the Council. The objectives as set out in Appendix A to the report were approved.

Resolved – That the proposed equality objectives attached as Appendix 'A' to be report be agreed.

127. References from Overview & Scrutiny

There were no references from Overview & Scrutiny.

128. Notification of Forthcoming Decisions

The Cabinet considered and endorsed the Notification of Decisions published on 17th February which set out the decisions expected to be taken by the Cabinet over the next three months.

Resolved – That the published Notification of Decisions for the period between March to May 2017 be endorsed.

129. 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.

130. Redevelopment of Old Library Site - Appendices One to Three

The Part II appendices were noted in determining the matters resolved in item 6 of the agenda [Minute 120 refers].

131. Schools Expansion Programme Update

An approach was agreed to take forward a proposal for the delivery of the schools expansion programme in Chalvey.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 7.33 pm)