

Cabinet – Meeting held on Monday, 19th June, 2017.

Present:- Councillors Munawar (Chair), Hussain (Vice-Chair), Ajaib, Bedi, Bal, Arvind Dhaliwal, Matloob, Nazir and Sharif (from 7.08pm)

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillors Smith and Strutton

Apologies for Absence:- None.

PART 1

1. Declarations of Interest

Councillor Bal declared that his daughter worked for Slough Borough Council.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th April 2017

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 18th April 2017 be approved as a correct record.

3. Cabinet Portfolios and Responsibilities 2017-18

The Cabinet formally noted the portfolios and responsible Cabinet Members appointed by the Leader of the Council, as detailed in Appendix A to the report. It was also noted that the Leader had appointed Councillor Sabia Hussain as Deputy Leader of the Council in accordance with Part 2 Article 7 (10) of the Constitution.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Cabinet portfolios and responsible Cabinet Members, as appointed by the Leader of the Council, be noted.
- (b) That the appointment of Councillor Sabia Hussain as Deputy Leader of the Council be noted.

4. Manifesto Update for Pledges 2016/18

The Cabinet received an update on the projects undertaken following the adoption of the Slough Labour Party manifesto in June 2016. The manifesto extended across a two-year period to 2018 and the report set out in detail how each of the pledges had been addressed.

A number of specific areas were discussed including delivery on the housing pledges, including the fact that the Council was on track to meet the commitment to construct 250 new social homes; had exceeded the target of 250 new homes for sale and rent; and developed a new Housing Strategy. It was also noted that the new Community Sports Stadium, Arbour Park, had opened and a pipeline of major capital schemes were underway such as the

Cabinet - 19.06.17

refurbishment of the ice arena, new leisure centre and the modernisation and expansion of a number of schools. The Cabinet welcomed the excellent progress that had been made in the first year of delivery against the manifesto priorities and confirmed that the responsible Cabinet Members would continue to take forward the commitments under their respective portfolios. After discussion, the update was noted.

The Cabinet priorities for 2017/18, as set out in Appendix A to the report, were considered and approved.

Resolved –

- (a) That the progress made to date on the projects undertaken as part of the commitment to the manifesto pledges adopted June 2016 be noted.
- (b) That the Cabinet's political priorities for the current municipal year as at Appendix A to the report be approved.

5. Financial Report - Final Outturn 2016/17

The Leader of the Council introduced a report that provided the Cabinet with the final outturn figures for the 2016-17 financial year. A General Fund revenue underspend of £0.026m was reported and 84% of the consolidated capital programme had been spent. The Housing Revenue Account position was a surplus of £0.564m.

The Cabinet welcomed the fact that the revenue budget had been balanced during another challenging year for local government finances, and that the slippage of the capital programme had been significantly reduced compared to previous years. The strong approach taken to financial management provided a solid platform for the delivery of the 2017-18 budget and Medium Term Financial Strategy.

Resolved – That the final outturn for the financial year 2016-17 be noted.

6. Performance & Projects Report: Q4 2016/17

The Assistant Director Finance & Audit introduced a report that provided the Cabinet with the latest performance information for the 2016-17 financial year. The new format included performance reporting against the Corporate Balanced Scorecard indicators and progress of key priority projects.

It was the first quarterly report following the refresh of the Five Year Plan, and the Corporate Balanced Scorecard had been aligned to the revised outcomes, with some new performance measures being reported for the first time. Cabinet Members discussed the two indicators assigned a 'red' RAG status, both of which related to 'excess weight' for children of primary school age. It was noted that a major scrutiny review of childhood obesity had been undertaken in 2014 and the Overview & Scrutiny Committee had already explored the potential to follow up this work during the next municipal year. In

response to a question, it was agreed that the follow up action from the previous review relation to possible use of planning powers to limit the opening of fast food outlets near to schools would be circulated.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the report was noted.

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.

7. Business Rates Discretionary Relief Policy

The Assistant Director Finance & Audit introduced a report which sought approval for the Discretionary Rate Relief Scheme. The Government had provided £300m for local councils to finance rate relief for businesses facing an increase to their bills following the revaluation earlier in the year.

The Council had been awarded £350,000 for 2017-18 and the scheme had been developed to maximise the use of the grant but not to exceed the local allocation. The scheme had been designed to support small and medium sized independent businesses in Slough. In accordance with requirements, the Council had consulted the Fire Service as the other precepting authority. There was likely to be a separate scheme to provide relief for public houses but guidance had yet to be issued.

Cabinet Members discussed the anticipated impact on Slough of the revaluation. An analysis had been done and it was agreed that further information would be circulated. At the conclusion of the discussion, the policy for discretionary rate relief was approved.

Resolved – That the policy for Discretionary Rate Relief, as set out in Appendix A to the report, be approved.

8. Slough Children's Services Trust - Update

The Cabinet Member for Children, Education & Families introduced a report that updated on the work of Slough Children Services Trust over the past year to improve services for the most vulnerable children and young people in the borough.

It was stated that there had been demonstrable improvements delivered in the past twelve months, although it was recognised that there was a significant amount of further work to do to bring all services up to the required standards. Several key developments were cited including the introduction of a new model of social care and an increase in the recruitment of permanent staff. Senior representatives of the Trust addressed the Cabinet and emphasised that the relationship between the Council and Trust was now much stronger and was the foundation for the continued improvement of services.

Cabinet - 19.06.17

Speaking under Rule 30, Councillor Strutton asked about the most significant future challenges facing the Trust and raised issues about home schooling for children excluded from school. The Cabinet welcomed the progress that had been made and reiterated its commitment to work closely in partnership with the Trust to continue to make the long-term, sustainable service improvements for Slough's children.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the update was noted.

Resolved – That the update on the progress made by Slough Children's Service Trust be noted.

9. **Small Sites Strategy Update Additional General Fund Sites**

The Cabinet Member for Urban Renewal introduced a report that sought approval for the development of a number of additional General Fund sites for private housing led schemes as part of the Small Sites Strategy.

The General Fund sites proposed to be disposed to and developed by Slough Urban Renewal were Maria Cowland Hall, The Lodge on Mercian Way, 150-160 Bath Road and Wexham Phase 3. The anticipated financial implications were set out fully in Appendix One, which was in Part II of the agenda and was considered in public without disclosing any of the exempt information. In addition to providing much needed housing, the Council would receive land receipts and a share of the development profits.

(Councillor Sharif joined the meeting)

The Cabinet discussed the anticipated financial benefits of the scheme and the position regarding affordable housing. At the conclusion of the discussion, the Cabinet agreed to dispose of the specified sites and to publish the relevant notices regarding the disposal of Public Open Space at Norway Drive and Mercian Recreation Grounds.

Resolved –

- (a) That Council officers proceed on the basis that the General Fund sites listed in Appendix One and Two to the report be disposed to and developed by SUR for private housing led schemes, subject to Cabinet approval for a transfer sum that represents no less than the best value land valuation.
- (b) That notices be published in relation to the disposal of Public Open Space at Norway Drive and Mercian Recreation Grounds with the results presented to Cabinet prior to any option being granted over these sites.

10. **References from Overview & Scrutiny**

There were no references from Overview & Scrutiny.

Cabinet - 19.06.17

11. Notification of Forthcoming Decisions

The Cabinet considered and endorsed the Notification of Decisions published on 19th May 2017 which set out the decisions expected to be taken by the Cabinet over the next three months.

Resolved – That the published Notification of Decision for the period between June to August 2017 be endorsed.

12. Exclusion of Press and Public

Resolved – That the press and public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the items in Part 2 of the Agenda, as they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to the individual as defined in Paragraph 1 and the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the Authority holding the information) as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (amended).

Below is a summary of the matters considered during Part II of the agenda.

13. Part II Minutes - 18th April 2017

The Part II minutes of the meeting held on 18th April 2017 were approved.

14. Proposed Senior Management Review

The process for reviewing the senior management structure to align with the Council's Five Year Plan was confirmed.

15. Small Sites Strategy Update - Additional General Fund Sites - Appendix One

The Part II Appendix One – Additional Small Sites General Fund Programme – was considered and noted during Part I of the agenda without disclosing any of the exempt information.

16. Strategic Acquisitions Purchases Update

An update was noted on the assets purchased and progress made on the strategic acquisition programme.

16(a) Redevelopment of Old Library Site

An update was received on the Old Library Site redevelopment and revised costings were approved.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.30 pm)