

Cabinet – Meeting held on Monday, 27th June, 2016.

Present:- Councillors Munawar (Chair), Hussain (Vice-Chair), Ajaib, Bal, Matloob, Sharif (from 6.51pm) and Sohal

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillors Anderson, Brooker, Davis, Pantelic, Swindlehurst and Wright

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 11th April 2016

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 11th April 2016 be approved as a correct record.

3. Cabinet portfolios and Commissioner Responsibilities

The Cabinet formally noted the portfolios and responsible Commissioners 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 portfolios and responsible Commissioners 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. Ruling Group Manifesto

The Cabinet received the Slough Labour Party Manifesto Commitments for the Borough elections held on Thursday 5th May 2016.

Commissioners formally agreed to adopt the Manifesto commitments as Council policy for delivery in the period up to the next Borough elections scheduled for May 2018. However, the Leader highlighted that the implications of the result of referendum to leave the European Union were likely to impact on the Council's financial position, the national policy context and other circumstances, which may result in the need to review some of the items in the Manifesto in the future.

Several questions were asked by others Members under Rule 30 which are summarised as follows:

- Councillor Pantelic asked the Commissioner for Education & Children's Services how she intended to take forward the commitment to work with and support Slough Children's Services Trust. The Commissioner stated that developing a better relationship with the Trust was a priority and was crucial to improving outcomes for children in Slough.
- Councillor Swindlehurst asked about the timescales for the delivery for the proposed community hubs. It was noted that progress was well advanced on the Trelawney Avenue Redevelopment Plan, which included the Langley hub, and the Cabinet would consider a further report in the near future.
- In view of the Manifesto commitment to upgrade the Ice Arena, Councillor Swindlehurst asked a number of questions about temporary provision during the nine month period of closure for refurbishment, including whether the impact of closure on current users such as Slough Jets would result in a potential loss of income for the new facility. The Strategic Director of Customer & Community Services responded that discussions had taken place with a range of users to try to find alternative provision or activities and it was hoped that the Jets would return to the newly refurbished arena. The full financial impacts of the specific usage of the refurbished arena were not quantified, however, the development included several new facilities which would help drive footfall. The revenue cost of temporary provision was in excess of £500,000 and the Council would continue to look at all viable options to support users through the period of closure.

At the conclusion of the discussion, it was agreed to adopt the Manifesto as Council policy, noting the review of any relevant items in light of the national economic situation and other circumstances.

Resolved – That the Slough Labour Party Manifesto 2016 be adopted as Council policy for the period to the next Borough Elections in May 2018.

5. Provisional Financial and Performance Outturn Report: 2015-16 Financial Year

The Assistant Director Finance & Audit introduced a report that provided the Cabinet with the provisional financial outturn information for 2015-16 and a summary of the Council's performance against balanced scorecard indicators, Five Year Plan outcomes and 'Gold' projects.

The provisional revenue outturn for the financial year was an overspend of £41k (revised from the £39k stated in the published report), maintaining the General Fund balances at £8.1m. This was a significant improvement on the

in year position reported previously to the Cabinet and reflected the significant work undertaken to contain the financial pressures and deliver the planned budget. The capital outturn was £44.7m against the programme of £76.9m with £22m agreed to be re-profiled into the 2016-17 financial year. The provisional outturn in terms of the Housing Revenue Account, savings and performance measures were noted.

The Cabinet welcomed the fact that the overall revenue outturn had been brought back into line with budget despite the challenging financial climate for the Council. Commissioners asked about the write offs totalling £1.6m; and the potential impact that Brexit could have on future Business Rates and the robustness of capital schemes. It was responded that provision had been made for write offs and there were therefore no wider budget impact in approving the write off requests in paragraph 11.1 of the report. The impact of Brexit on local businesses was uncertain and Business Rates revenues would be closely monitored and factored into future budget decisions. Business cases for capital projects took a long term view about the viability of investment and the strategy aimed to use capital to generate revenue and contribute to savings.

(Councillor Sharif joined the meeting)

Members speaking under Rule 30 raised a number of issues which are summarised as follows:

- In view of the 'red' status of Outcome 5 of the Five Year Plan relating children and young people's services, Councillor Pantelic asked about the position regarding the joint improvement plan between the Council and Trust. The Interim Director of Children's Services stated that the Ofsted deadline for agreeing the plan was 30th June and she was confident that this deadline would be met.
- Councillors Pantelic, Swindlehurst and Anderson asked a number of questions about the plans in place to address the overspend in Adult Social Care of £600k and the impact of overspends in the Wellbeing directorate on other areas of the Council. The Commissioner for Health & Social Care responded that an ambitious transformation programme was in place, the scale of which meant some slippage in delivering savings was likely, particularly as a cautious approach was being taken when reconfiguring services to ensure they met the needs of vulnerable people. The deliverability of savings elsewhere in the Wellbeing budget had been affected by the transfer of funding to Slough Children's Services Trust and, where appropriate, savings had been re-profiled into 2016-17.
- Councillor Anderson asked about the position regarding reserves. The General Fund reserve was £8.1m and the minimum level was £7.3m, noting that significant financial pressures and volatility meant it would be prudent to retain a reserve above the minimum level. Councillor Anderson asked why the Cabinet was not considering a report to utilise

a large proportion of these reserves for the provision of a temporary ice facility to accommodate users most affected by the nine-month closure for refurbishment. The background to this matter was discussed, and it was stated that there was no decision currently required to be taken by the Cabinet, however, the Council was still exploring the practical measures to support users during the period of closure and any proposals would be put to Members at the appropriate time.

The Cabinet noted the financial and performance outturn for 2015-16 and agreed the various recommendations relating to the capital programme, write offs, virements and fees and charges.

It was noted that this would be the last Cabinet meeting attended by the Assistant Director Finance & Audit. Members thanked Mr Holmes for his work for the Council and wished him well in his new role.

Resolved –

The Cabinet noted:

- (a) That the provisional revenue outturn for 2015-16 was an over spend of £41K, maintaining General Fund balances at £8.1M.
- (b) That the provisional capital outturn was expenditure of £44.70m against the capital programme of £76.90m, with £22.0m re-profiled into the 2016-17 financial year.
- (c) That within the Council's balanced scorecard, 42.9% of indicators were green, 15.4% were red and 17.6% were amber. The remaining 22 indicators were recorded either as
 - N/A 20.9% - not applicable because
 - It was a volume indicator only;
 - the indicator was to be updated later in the year
 - the value which SBC cannot seek to directly influence or because the issue is complex
 - Unassigned (3.3%) – this relates to the 3 children social care indicators where a RAG status was currently unassigned
- (d) That of the 8 Gold projects as of the end of March 2016; one had been assessed as "Green", six as "Amber" and one as "Red".
- (e) That of the eight highlight 5YP outcome reports which had been RAG-rated as at March 2016, the overall status of three had been assessed at 'Green', three at 'Amber', one at 'Amber/Green' and one unassigned.

The Cabinet agreed:

- (f) The revised 2015-16 capital programme to take account of re-profiling of previously approved 2015-16 projects into the 2016-17 programme.

- (g) That an increase of £700k in the ERP capital scheme be approved.
- (h) The revenue carry forwards included within the 2015/16 outturn.
- (i) The Virements and write-offs detailed within the report.
- (j) The introduction of a new £5000.00 fixed penalty charge in relation to the Smoke and Carbon Monoxide Alarm (England) Regulations 2015; and delegated authority was given to the Housing Regulation Team's Officers to enforce the policy under the powers of the 2015 Regulations in accordance with the Statement of Principles.

6. Burnham Station Experimental Scheme

The Commissioner for Highways & Transport introduced a report that sought approval to make permanent the experimental northbound option for Station Road, Burnham; and the implementation of a series of improvements to the road network in the surrounding area and in the immediate vicinity of Burnham Station.

The proposals sought to address the longstanding traffic problems in the area and improve access to the station ahead of the start of new Crossrail services. An experimental scheme had been in place since October 2015 and significant consultation, surveys and other engagement had taken place, the results of which were included in the report and supporting appendices. Phase 1 of the experiment involved the closure of a section of Station Road under the railway bridge and had resulted in an adverse effect on the surrounding road network and negative feedback from a majority of residents and road users. Phase 2 allowed northbound traffic only on a section Station Road and the overall feedback was more positive. 81% of survey respondents said that Phase 1 had made their journey worse, whereas 72% said Phase 2 had made their journey better. Officers highlighted that a number of other changes would be implemented to further improve the permanent scheme such as a 20mph zone and new pedestrian crossing points.

The Cabinet discussed a number of issues including the use of experimental orders in the future and local communication and engagement. It was responded that an experimental order allowed consultation and feedback on the operation of a scheme itself, rather than the perceptions of the impacts that a planned scheme may have. They were also designed to be flexible to be able to respond to the actual impacts a scheme had on the network during the experimental phase. Some lessons had been learnt for the future on the engagement of ward members and the communications plan with residents.

Speaking under Rule 30, Councillor Wright raised some perceived safety issues in the detailed design, including the risk to disabled people in particular of the new zebra crossing on Burnham Lane given the improved flow of traffic and problem of speeding. Officers confirmed that the new crossings would be Disability Discrimination Act compliant and would meet all of required safety

standards for disabled and partially sighted people. A number of other improvements were being taken forward in the detailed design and bus companies and other stakeholders were being engaged. In response to other questions raised, the Cabinet noted that the £2m funding contribution from the Berkshire Local Transport Body had been confirmed for delivery in 2016-17; that the transport impacts of major regeneration schemes would be built into the modelling for future schemes; and further comments and feedback from local residents would be taken into account in finalising the detailed design of the scheme.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Cabinet agreed that the permanent scheme should be based on the northbound option for Station Road and incorporate a range of associated improvements around the station and on the surrounding road network.

Resolved –

- (a) That the offer of the Berkshire Local Transport Body to provide £2m towards the cost of the Burnham Station improvements be welcomed;
- (b) That the terms of the offer, including the need for the remainder of the scheme cost approximately £100K to be met by Section 106 contributions identified for the Burnham area be noted;
- (c) That the key elements of the permanent scheme, including the northbound option for Station Road and as set out in paragraph 5.8 of the report, be agreed in principle, subject to detailed design and the consideration of further feedback from the public consultation.

7. Old Library Site Development Options

The Cabinet considered a report that sought approval for the Council to provide funding for Slough Urban Renewal to develop two high quality hotels and a restaurant as part of the mixed use development of the Old Library Site. Commissioners considered the Part II Appendix 3 – Financial Options Appraisal, which contained exempt information, during Part I of the meeting without disclosing any exempt information.

The Old Library Site had been identified as a surplus asset in view of the impending transfer of library services to The Curve. The site was in Council ownership and occupied a prime location identified for hotel use within the Heart of Slough strategy. Five options had been evaluated and the preferred option was for two high standard hotels within a mixed use development. The financial implications and risks associated with the development of a 144 room short stay and 92 room long stay hotel were noted. The hotel scheme would deliver regeneration benefits to the town centre and would also generate an ongoing revenue stream. The Cabinet would receive a further report on the options for the remainder of the site at a future meeting.

The Cabinet considered the approach taken to manage the risks around such a major investment and discussed a number of other issues such as the provision of car parking and potential for the development to contribute to the wider regeneration of the town centre. The options for the remainder of the site, including residential or office space, were briefly discussed and this would be subject to further work on the options before the Cabinet received a report at a future meeting.

At the conclusion of the discussion it was agreed to recommend to full Council that funding be provided to take forward the recommended option for two hotels and a restaurant and to receive a report in due course on the development of the remainder of the site in September 2016.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Old Library Site was no longer required for the purposes for which it is presently held.
- (b) That the Old Library Site be appropriated for other purposes for the benefit, improvement or development of the Council's area.
- (c) That a recommendation be made to Full Council that the Council develop two hotels and a restaurant on the Old Library site, at an estimated cost of £30.5m (borrowing cost £55m) for the hotels and £1.7m (borrowing cost £3m) for the restaurant.
- (d) That the Council enter into an Agreement for Lease with Landlord's Works for a 25-year term with a hotel operator for part of the Old Library Site and note that this could be extended to 45 years to match the offer from the hotel operator.
- (e) That a follow-up report be presented to Cabinet in September 2016 to present complementary development options and recommendations for the remainder of the site.

8. Progress Report on the Review of the Local Plan for Slough

A report was received on the progress that had been made to date in reviewing the Local Plan, which would replace the Core Strategy (2008), Site Allocations Plan (2010) and the 'saved' parts of the Local Plan for Slough (2004).

The new plan would set out the planning policy framework until 2036 and would both shape decisions about the future growth of the town and affect the way the Council provided its services in the future. Its influence would extend well beyond planning and it was important therefore that the plan was 'mainstreamed' across the Council. The work completed to date had highlighted the severe shortage of land in Slough which would make it difficult to meet all of the identified needs for the town, including the projected 20,000 additional homes. The next stage was an 'Issues and Options' report which

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would go out to public consultation by the end of the year. The Commissioner for Housing & Urban Renewal proposed, and it was agreed, that a workshop be held for Members to develop a new vision for Slough that would inform the 'Issues and Options' report.

The Cabinet discussed the range of options, some of which were radical, to address the key challenges and commented on the need to ensure the Member and public consultation was designed to engage them in the reality of the choices facing Slough. Following a number of questions from Councillors Davis, Anderson and Swindlehurst under Rule 30, it was clarified that the release of Green Belt land in Slough was one of the options for consideration and any decisions would be informed by the Green Belt Study, consultation and discussions with neighbouring authorities.

Resolved –

- (a) That the update on the review of the Local Plan be noted.
- (b) That a workshop for Members be held in July to develop a new vision for Slough to set the strategic objectives against which options can be assessed.
- (c) That it be noted that the release of Green Belt land was one of a number of options that would be considered to address the severe shortage of land in Slough and these options would be included in the 'Issues and Options' report for public consultation.

9. Revised Corporate Parenting Strategy 2016-18

The Interim Director of Children's Services introduced a report which sought approval of the revised Corporate Parenting Strategy for 2016-18. The priorities were based on the six themes of 'Our Pledge: our promises to our looked after children' that had been agreed by the Cabinet and full Council in April 2016.

The new strategy had been produced in close consultation with Slough Children's Services Trust and it included new terms of reference for the Corporate Parenting Panel. The Panel had met on 23rd June and discussed the strategy and agreed that a joint action plan between the Council and Trust be developed as well as a scorecard to monitor performance. Taken together, this suite of documents were key deliverables for the Council from the Delivery Plan submitted to Ofsted in response to the inspection report published in February 2016.

The Commissioner for Education & Children's Services explained the rationale for the changes to the terms of reference to the Corporate Parenting Panel which would make it more inclusive and crucially more child centric to hear the voice of looked after children. The membership of the Panel would be finalised following a further review to minimise the risks of any potential conflicts of interest between Members involved in the Panel, scrutiny or other

roles with responsibilities for children's services. The Leader asked for assurance that the new strategy and supporting documents would deliver service improvements and it was responded that there was now a clear path flowing from the Pledge, strategy, action plan and scorecard, with a refreshed Corporate Parenting Panel to provide partnership oversight. The Cabinet welcomed the work that had been done and approved the strategy.

A number of questions were raised by Members under Rule 30. Councillor Brooker highlighted that there had been a significant change in Member representation on the Corporate Parenting Panel and suggested that non-Panel members be able to attend meetings. He also raised the issue of Members attendance at the Panel and the Cabinet agreed that Panel Members should commit to playing a full and active role, noting that all Members had clear responsibilities as corporate parents. Councillor Pantelic asked what different approach would be taken to deliver success. The Commissioner for Education & Children's Services highlighted that the aspirational promises made in the Pledge were clearly supported by the strategy, action plan and scorecard to measure progress. A strong working relationship between the Council, Trust and other partners would also be a priority to improve services and outcomes for children.

Resolved – That the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2016-18 be agreed as at Appendix A to the report, subject to the finalisation of the review of Member representation on the Corporate Parenting Panel.

10. Future Arrangements for Cambridge Education Contract and Related Services

The Interim Director of Children's Services introduced a report which set out proposals for the future delivery of services and functions within the Mott MacDonald Ltd (Cambridge Education) contract, including an extension to the existing contract to deliver some specified services on behalf of the Council. An update was also provided on the implementation of Schedule 2 of the Second Direction issued by the Secretary of State for Education on 30th September 2015.

The background to these matters was explained and the Cabinet was advised that extending the Cambridge Education by two years for school improvement and integrated support services was considered to be the best way for the Council to meet its service challenges most effectively. It was also proposed that support services to schools, including fair access, home to school transport and admissions be brought back in house from 1 October 2016; and to conduct further work on the transfer of children centres and early years provision to Slough Children's Services Trust with a view to bringing a further to Cabinet in September on the financial and contractual issues.

Councillors Brooker and Pantelic raised several issues under Rule 30 including the financial details of the Cambridge Education contract extension and the timescales for transferring services to the Trust by October 2016. It was noted that negotiations with Cambridge Education were ongoing and the

Council was seeking to make savings through this process. It was recognised that the timescale for transfer of services to the Trust was tight but that the Council had been working hard for many months to fulfil its obligations to prepare for the transfer on the timescale set out the 2nd Direction. A series of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and operational targets would need to be agreed with the Trust. Concerns were raised by some Members about the time taken to agree such measures for the services that transferred to the Trust in October 2015. It was clarified that the KPIs were in place but some target were yet to be fully agreed and were subject of ongoing discussion between the Trust, Department for Education and the Council.

After due consideration, the recommendations were agreed and a further report would be received by Cabinet in September 2016 on the transfer of responsibility for children's centres and early years services to the Trust.

Resolved –

- (a) That the contract period for school improvement services and the integrated support services in the Council's contract with Mott MacDonald Ltd (Cambridge Education) be extended by two years to achieve a five-year contract period overall for these services.
- (b) That the progress and conclusions of the negotiations of the Deed of Variation with Mott MacDonald Limited (Cambridge Education) be delegated to the Director, Children's Services following consultation with the Chief Executive and the Council's Commissioner for Education and Children.
- (c) That support services to schools within the Council's current contract with Mott MacDonald Ltd (Cambridge Education) are brought in-house and managed directly by the Council from 1 October 2016.
- (d) That a Deed of Variation to the Services Contract between the Council and Slough Children's Services Trust Limited (SCST) be drawn up to reflect the transfer of responsibility for children's centres and early years services to the Trust, in order to clarify operational, financial and performance management arrangements subject to Cabinet agreement in September 2016.
- (e) That the Council and the Commissioner for Children's Services appointed by the Secretary of State for Education requests the Secretary of State for Education to update Schedule 2 of the Second Direction to reflect the Council's ongoing responsibility for the delivery of some of the education services currently listed therein, as agreed with Slough Children's Services Trust Limited.

11. Transfer of Special Education Needs Funding to Slough Children's Services Trust

A report was received on proposals to transfer funding from the Council to Slough Children's Services Trust for services to children assessed as having a Special Educational Need (SEN). The services were transferred to the Trust in October 2015, however, both parties agreed that the formal transfer of funding should be delayed due to the complex financial issues involved. Both parties now agreed the funding with a total value of £14.298m could be transferred. The Cabinet considered the report and agreed the recommendations.

Resolved –

- (a) That the transfer of services and budgets of £14.298m as detailed in paragraph 5.5 of the report be approved;
- (b) That the timescale for the transfers, set out in paragraph 5.6 of the report, be agreed; and
- (c) That the total amount being transferred to SCST including decisions previously made, as at paragraph 5.7 of the report, be noted.

12. Refugee Dispersal, Resettlement of Syrian Refugees and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children

The Commissioner for Regulation & Consumer Protection introduced a report that sought approval on the activities proposed in response to the Government's request on refugee dispersal; Syrian Vulnerable Persons Relocation Scheme (SVPRS) and Unaccompanied Asylum Seeking Children (UASC) scheme. The proposal was to permit the Government's contractor to source and operate a single dwelling in Slough to support asylum seekers dispersal and that up to five small families (with up to two children) be supported under the SVPRS over the next four or five years. It was proposed that no offer be made to accept any children under the UASC scheme until services for the most vulnerable children in Slough were more stable. It was considered that the overall package was reasonable and proportionate for Slough.

The Cabinet discussed the report and a number of questions were asked by Councillors Wright and Swindlehurst under Rule 30. It was clarified that the single dwelling under the dispersal programme would be sourced by the Government's contractor and would not be a Council owned property. Experience from other authorities suggested that faith groups or altruistic landlords may provide assistance in identifying or providing a suitable property. The Council would have a veto on the location if it did not consider it to be suitable. Community cohesion issues were raised and the Head of Consumer Protection & Business Compliance explained that a steering group of partners had considered this and other operational matters in detail and were satisfied that any risks were minimal and could be managed. After due consideration, the recommendations were agreed.

Resolved –

- (a) That a specific and limited offer is made to support asylum seekers dispersal by permitting the Governments contractor to source and operate a single dwelling in Slough.
- (b) That a specific offer be made to support for the SVPR scheme by accepting up to 5 small families (with up to 2 children) over the next 4/5 years and that an Operational Group be established to facilitate the support.
- (c) That no offer be made to accept any children from the UASC scheme at this stage, until services for the most vulnerable children in the borough were in a more stable position. That delegated power be given to the Interim Director of Children's Services to agree in consultation with the Slough Children's Services Trust Ltd and others the extent of the councils future involvement in the UASC scheme.

13. References from Overview & Scrutiny

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

14. Notification of Forthcoming Decisions

Resolved – That the published Notification of Decisions for period between June to September 2016, published on 20th May 2016, be endorsed.

15. 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.

16. Part II Minutes - 11th April 2016

Resolved – That the Part II minutes of the Cabinet meeting held on 11th April 2016 be approved as a correct record.

17. Old Library Site Development Options - Appendix 3

The Cabinet had considered Appendix 3 to the report on the Old Library Site Development Options in resolving matters in Part I of the agenda without disclosing any exempt information.

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Resolved – That Appendix 3 to the Old Library Site Development Options report be noted.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.19 pm)