

Cabinet – Meeting held on Monday, 18th June, 2018.

Present:- Councillors Swindlehurst (Chair), Hussain (Vice-Chair, arrived 6.36pm), Carter, Mann, Nazir, Pantelic and Sadiq

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillors Strutton and Wright

Apologies for Absence:- Councillor Anderson

PART 1

8. Declarations of Interest

No interests were declared.

9. Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th April 2018 and the Special Meeting held on 29th May 2018

Resolved – That the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 16th April 2018 and 29th May 2018 be approved as a correct record.

10. Statutory Service Plans

The Lead Member for Regulation & Consumer Protection and the Trading Standards Manager introduced a report and made a presentation on the Statutory Service Plans in relation to the Food Safety Service, Health & Safety Service and Trading Standards Service. The Cabinet was asked to recommend the plans to full Council for endorsement on 24th July 2018.

(Councillor Hussain joined the meeting)

The work of each of the services in protecting the public and businesses was outlined including activity to tackle doorstep crime and scams which particularly effected vulnerable people; the inspection and improvement process for food premises; and the work to identify and investigate counterfeit products and underage sale of age-related products.

Each of the plans was aligned to the Five Year Plan and the teams worked with a wide range of other agencies to deliver the service. Members were informed of the progress of commercial activity within the service and welcomed the success of the Primary Authority scheme in providing chargeable advice to many large businesses.

Members discussed the health and safety of trampoline facilities following issues raised in last years plan and discussed the action being taken on food traceability, particularly in relation to suspect meat products. Speaking under Rule 30, Councillor Strutton commented on the successful work of the department and asked about the commercialisation of the service and the

enforcement of food safety inspections. It was noted that a risk based system was used in terms of the frequency of food inspections.

The Cabinet commended the teams on their work and agreed that the work undertaken was vital in protecting the community. It was agreed to recommend the three Statutory Service Plans to full Council for endorsement.

Recommended – That the Statutory Service Plans in relation to the Food Safety, Health & Safety and Trading Standards work undertaken by the Council be endorsed.

11. Enforcement of Redress Scheme for Letting Agents Etc

The Lead Member for Regulation & Consumer Protection introduced a report that sought approval to make arrangements for the enforcement of the Redress Schemes for Lettings Agency Work and Property Management Work (Requirement to Belong to a Scheme etc) (England) Order 2014.

The regulations would make it a legal requirement for all letting agents and property management operators to join one of three Government approved schemes and the Cabinet was asked to give delegated authority to trading standards officers to issue fixed penalty notices up to the maximum of £5,000 for non-compliance. The scheme would provide a proper channel for complaints to an independent body about the service they had received.

The Cabinet welcomed the action was being taken given some of the problems in Slough's private rented sector, although it was noted that all Slough letting agents and property management companies currently on the Council's records were members. Enforcement of the Order would provide an additional tool to the Council to support the effective regulation of the sector.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Cabinet agreed the recommendations to delegate enforcement of the Order to officers.

Resolved –

- (a) That the implementation and enforcement of The Redress Schemes for Lettings Agency Work and Property Management Work (Requirement to Belong to a Scheme etc.) (England) Order 2014 be delegated to trading standards via the Service Lead for Regulatory Services.
- (b) That it be noted that the day to day enforcement of the Order would be undertaken by officers in the Trading Standards Service in accordance with the existing similar authorisations in the Council's constitution.
- (c) That the monetary penalty for non-compliance with the Order be set at the maximum sum of £5,000 in line with the recommendations of the Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) guidance.

- (d) That the Service Lead for Regulatory Services be authorised to make amendments to the amount of the monetary penalty, in accordance with the guidance where the enforcement authority is satisfied that there are extenuating circumstances taking into account any representations made by the lettings agent or property manager during the 28 day period, following the authority's notice of intention to issue a fine.

12. Ruling Group Manifesto and Reporting

Further to the decision taken by the Cabinet on 29th May 2018 to adopt the Slough Labour Party Manifesto 2018 as Council policy, the Service Lead, Strategy & Performance introduced a report that detailed the reporting arrangements for delivering of the manifesto.

Each manifesto pledge had been assigned to a Lead Member, lead officer and director with specific actions to work towards the commitment that had been made. The pledges had also been cross referenced to the Council's Five Year Plan. It was proposed that the Cabinet receive reports on a quarterly basis alongside performance and project reports, the first of which would be received by the Cabinet in September 2018. It was noted that there was more detail in internal versions such as timescales and costings that sat behind each pledge.

The Cabinet welcomed the detailed work that had been undertaken to set out how the Council would deliver the manifesto pledges and the reporting arrangements were agreed.

Resolved –

- (a) That the template for reporting progress against delivery of the Ruling Group Manifesto attached as Appendix A to the report be agreed.
- (b) That progress be reported on a quarterly basis.

13. Performance & Projects Report Q4 2017/18

The Service Lead, Strategy & Performance and the Programme Management Lead introduced a report that provided the Cabinet with the latest performance information to the end of March 2018 and updated on the status of key Council projects.

There were eighteen performance measures included in the Corporate Balanced Scorecard and the majority were rated 'green'. None of the indicators had shown a deterioration in performance since the last quarter, although two remained 'red' rated – prevalence of children with excess weight at the end of primary school and bus punctuality. There were measures in place to address the issues raised in both of these areas. There had been notable performance improvement in several indicators – provision of 40-74 year olds offered an NHS Health Check; increase in the number of dwellings;

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increase in the number of affordable homes; and increase in the Business Rates collection rate. The Cabinet welcomed the progress that was being made in these key areas.

It was noted that 63% of 'Gold' projects were rated 'green'. There were two 'red' rated projects which were the Grove Academy and Haybrook College projects and the Cabinet noted the more recent progress that had been made. A query was raised about the work being done under the new homelessness reduction legislation noted in paragraph 5.4.8 of the report. Further progress had been made and an update would be provided through the Lead Member for Corporate Finance and Housing.

Speaking under Rule 30, Councillor Strutton raised concern about the impact of Slough's performance on children's oral health on the childhood obesity indicators. The Lead Member for Health & Social Care commented that improving children's oral health had been identified as a key priority and there was a substantial amount of work taking place in nursery and early years settings, such as the Healthy Smiles campaigns as well as work in primary schools including a new pilot scheme with NHS England.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the performance and projects 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.

14. Revenue Financial Report - 2017-18 (Provisional Outturn)

The Service Lead, Finance introduced a report that provided an update on the provisional financial outturn for the Council for the 2017-18 financial year.

There was a provisional underspend of £0.224m on the General Fund budget of £104.376m. This was an improvement of £0.875m on the financial position reported at the end of the third quarter and the key areas of savings and increased revenue were noted. The Leader of the Council indicated that a future budget priority would be to increase the level of reserves to reflect the recently increased level of borrowing to support the capital programme. The Cabinet noted the budget pressures in areas such as the demand on adult social care services, housing benefit and temporary accommodation. All planned savings had been achieved for the year, or replaced with alternative savings if they could not be met.

The Cabinet considered and approved the virements detailed in section 7 of the report and the write off requests in section 8. Approval was sought to begin a tendering process for a new insurance contract as the current one expired on 31st March 2019. The new contract would be for three years with a possible two year extension and was likely to include buildings cover for acts of terrorism for the first time. It was agreed to begin the tendering process for the insurance contract.

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The Cabinet noted the provisional outturn position and welcomed the fact that the budget had been balanced, with a small underspend, despite the continued pressures on budgets and demand for vital local services.

Resolved –

- (a) That the provisional outturn financial position of the council for 2017/18 be noted;
- (b) That the budget virements as listed in paragraph 7 of the report be approved;
- (c) That the write offs as requested in paragraph 8 of the report be approved; and
- (d) That the resolution in paragraph 9.5 of the report in relation to the tender for the Council's insurance contract be approved.

15. Capital Monitoring Report at 31st March 2018

The Service Lead, Finance introduced a report that updated on the spend against the capital budgets for the 2017-18 financial year.

The total revised capital budget for the year was £190m and of which £154m had been spent. This was a slippage of 19% which was slightly higher than last year but much improved on historic levels. The budget for schemes that had slipped but would be delivered would be carried forward into 2018-19.

Lead Members discussed the fact that the major investment in the town's leisure facilities was due to be completed and each of the schemes for the ice arena, new leisure centre, Salt Hill Park Activity Centre and Langley Leisure Centre had broadly been delivered on time and budget.

The Cabinet noted the report.

Resolved – That the report be noted with Capital Expenditure of £154.0m against an approved budget of £190.4m. This represents slippage on the approved budget of 19%.

16. Former Thames Valley University Campus and Montem Leisure Centre Demolition

The Director of Regeneration introduced a report that sought approval for a budget to demolish the buildings on the former Thames Valley University site prior to the transfer to Slough Urban Renewal (SUR) and the Montem Leisure Centre to facilitate the regeneration of both sites.

The existing empty buildings were unsightly and proceeding with the demolition would de-risk the sites and continue the momentum for the future

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regeneration. It was noted that the demolition costs would be reimbursed to the Council from SUR out of development sale receipts. The Cabinet agreed the importance of demolition to move forward with the redevelopment of both sites. It was suggested that time lapse photography be used to demonstrate the progress that was being made.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the demolition budget of £4m was agreed.

Resolved –

- (a) That a demolition budget of £4m be agreed to cover vacant buildings on the NWQ and the Montem Leisure Centre sites; and
- (b) That delegated authority be given to the Director of Regeneration, following consultation with the Leader of the Council, to agree the final procurement contracts.

17. Developments at Heathrow Update

The Director of Regeneration updated the Cabinet on recent developments relating to the expansion of Heathrow Airport and associated issues. The Council was the accountable body for the Heathrow Strategic Planning Group and a significant amount of work was going on to prepare for expansion. It was noted that the House of Commons would carry out a crucial vote on Heathrow expansion on 12th July.

The Director summarised some of the current thinking around the skills, education and learning opportunities that would arise from airport expansion as well as the estimated £1bn regeneration in the town. There were expected to be significant skills shortages in construction and the concept of a Slough Regeneration Campus / 'Slough Construction Centre of Excellence' would be explored with the Council working with partners to provide the training opportunities for local people to access employment.

The Cabinet supported the principle of taking proactive steps to put a skills package in place for the full range of career and employment opportunities, including higher level roles. It was agreed that a follow up report would be received by the Cabinet at the next meeting on 16th July to set out how the concept could be taken forward.

The Leader of Council updated the Cabinet on some of the discussions and representations he had been making to highlight the Council's support for expansion ahead of the Parliamentary vote, and to secure the best deal for Slough. It was agreed to write to the Member of Parliament for Slough, Tan Dhesi MP, to make him aware of the work the Council was doing to capture the local benefits particularly with regards to the skills agenda.

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Resolved –

- (a) That the update on the recent developments on the expansion of Heathrow airport be noted.
- (b) That the Cabinet receive a report at the meeting on 16th July 2018 to include any decisions required including the work with partners to capture the skills, employment and investment opportunities locally.
- (c) That a letter be sent to Tan Dhesi MP to update him on the Council's position in support of expansion and on the work the Council was doing to seek to maximise the local benefits.

18. References from Overview & Scrutiny

There were no references from Overview & Scrutiny.

19. Notification of Forthcoming Decisions

The Cabinet considered and endorsed the Notification of Key Decisions published on 11th May 2018 which set out the key decisions expected to be taken by the Cabinet over the next three months.

Resolved – That the published Notification of Decisions be endorsed.

20. 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.

21. Part II Minutes - Special Cabinet, 29th May 2018

Resolved – That the Part II minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 29th May 2018 be approved as a correct record.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.32 pm and closed at 7.57 pm)