

Cabinet – Meeting held on Monday, 14th September, 2020.

Present:- Councillors Swindlehurst (Chair), Akram (Vice-Chair), Anderson, Bains, Carter, Mann, Nazir and Pantelic

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillors Sabah

Apologies for Absence:- None.

PART 1

34. Declarations of Interest

Agenda item 8 (Minutes 41 and 47 refer) – Stoke Wharf Draft Indicative Site Development Plan: Councillor Mann declared that she was a member of the Planning Committee which would determine a future application. She therefore stated she would not participate in the discussion and decision at Cabinet.

Agenda item 9 (Minutes 42 and 48 refer) – Britwell Centre GP Surgery Development: Councillor Anderson declared that he was a patient at the Avenue Medical Centre and he would therefore not participate in the discussion and decision on this item.

35. Minutes of the Meeting held on 13th July 2020

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 13th July 2020 be approved as a correct record.

36. Statutory Service Plan

The Lead Member for Planning & Regulation introduced a report that sought agreement to recommend the Food Safety Statutory Service Plan to Council for approval. The plan was an important part of the process to ensure the authority was meeting its requirements on enforcing food safety law and practice.

The Food & Safety Manager gave an overview of the work undertaken in the past year and the future priorities contained in the plan. It was noted that 98% of due inspections to high and medium risk premises were completed in 2019/20 and this was on track to have been 100% but for the Covid-19 restrictions impacting on a small number of planned inspections. The pandemic had impacted on business as usual service provision, with the team engaged in other activity such as contact tracing, however assurance was provided that the statutory services were running effectively.

The Cabinet welcomed the continued high level of performance of the team and also commended the work on the Primary Authority scheme. Members discussed the investigation and actions taken arising from the 393 complaints

Cabinet - 14.09.20

and enquiries about food businesses in Slough in the past year. This figure included concerns and complaints about hygiene and standards, as well as requests for information from new businesses starting up. At the conclusion of the discussion the Cabinet agreed to recommend approval of the Food Service Statutory Service Plan to Council on 24th September 2020.

Recommended – That the Food Safety Statutory Service Plan be approved.

37. Performance & Projects Report, Quarter 1 2020/21

The Service Lead, Strategy & Performance introduced a report that provided the Cabinet with the latest performance information for the first quarter of the 2020/21 financial year as measured by the corporate balanced scorecard indicators, key projects and manifesto commitments.

Year end targets for 2020/21 would be set during the second quarter of the year so that the full impact of Covid-19 could be analysed. The quarter 1 update therefore focused on levels on trends rather than RAG-rating against targets. Ten performance indicators had improved during the quarter including adults managing their care through direct payments, journey times and recycling, with ten deteriorating. These included a number of measures directly impacted on by the pandemic such as housing completions, collection of Business Rates and Council Tax and unemployment. In relation to key projects, ten were rated 'green' during quarter 1, ten were 'amber' and six were 'red'. The measures being taken to address 'red' rated projects were highlighted.

The Cabinet recognised that the impacts of Covid-19 were clear in the data provided. Unemployment had risen from 2.5% in July 2019 to 8.1% in July 2020 and it was expected to rise further as the furlough scheme was withdrawn at the end of October. Lead Members agreed that jobs and skills would be key elements of the recovery from Covid-19 and it was anticipated that further Government support would be forthcoming in the coming months.

At the conclusion of the discussion the quarter 1 performance and projects report was noted.

Resolved – That the Council's current performance as measured by the performance indicators within the balanced scorecard, the progress status of the gold projects, and progress against the Manifesto commitments be noted.

38. Revenue Budget Monitor - Quarter 1 2020/21

The Lead Member for Governance & Customer Services introduced a report that updated on the financial position of the Council's revenue account for the first quarter of the year to the end of June 2020.

The forecast year end overspend was £1.9m, which was 1.57% of the revenue budget. Whilst this figure was broadly similar to that at the same

Cabinet - 14.09.20

time in previous years, and the budget had been balanced by year end due to strong financial management, it was highlighted that the Covid-19 response and pressures had had a very significant impact and caused future uncertainty. The forecast overspend would have been £14.6m before the Covid grant of £12.7m had been applied. The report set out the actions being undertaken to contain the overspend and the Cabinet noted the current position regarding the potential financial risk of Slough Children's Service Trust as detailed in paragraphs 5.12 to 5.15 of the report.

Lead Members discussed the Covid-19 implications on the Council budget and asked whether funding would be made available for recently announced Government initiatives such as Covid Marshalls. It was responded that in addition to the Covid grant as reported, the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government was surveying the pressures on councils. No funding had been announced for Covid Marshalls.

The Cabinet also considered the virement and write off requests as set out in the sections 9 and 10 of the report respectively. These were approved.

Resolved –

- (a) That the reported underlying financial position of the Council for the year end 2020-21 be noted;
- (b) That the Council's provisional reserve balances for the year end 2020-21 be noted;
- (c) That budget transfers (virements) for 2020-21 as requested in Section 9 of the report be approved;
- (d) That write offs for the first quarter of 2020-21 as requested in Section 10 of the report be approved.

39. Capital Monitoring Report - Quarter 1, 2020/21

The Lead Member for Governance & Customer Services introduced a report which summarised spend against capital budgets for the first quarter of 2020/21 to the end of June.

The revised capital budget for 2020/21 was £172.7m of which £14.4m had been spent during the first quarter, which included £2m drawdown by James Elliman Homes to purchase properties for temporary accommodation; £6.1m on the Old Library Site hotel development; and £1.3m on the construction of new affordable homes. Expenditure in the first quarter was significantly lower than the same period last year due to the Covid-19 restrictions, but it was currently expected that 73% of the revised budget would be spent by the end of the year. The Cabinet discussed the potential of catching up on some of the schemes and it was noted that task groups were working on the various projects and a further update would be provided to Cabinet in the next quarterly report in November. The Cabinet noted the report.

Resolved – That the summary of spend against capital budgets for the 2020-21 financial year, as at the end of June 2020 on a consolidated and directorate basis be noted.

40. Centre of Slough: Regeneration Framework Masterplan

The Cabinet received a report that sought approval of the final Slough Regeneration Framework which set out the Council's corporate spatial aspirations for the centre of Slough over the next 10-15 years. A comprehensive presentation was given on the key aspects of the Framework.

The plan promoted connectivity between the neighbourhoods and encouraged active and sustainable transport principles. It was stated that delivering the step change envisaged would not only require new homes but be driven by the prosperity from a new Central Business District (CDB) that would support new jobs and reinvigorate the retail, leisure and cultural activity in the town centre. The town centre's retail footprint would be reduced in size with the aim of ensuring that the future offer was able to meet the shopping needs of local people and visitors. The illustrative masterplan which formed the spatial representation of the Regeneration Framework demonstrated how the centre of Slough could deliver approximately 115,000 to 280,000 sq. m. of office space; 14,000 to 15,500 sq. m. of retail floorspace; 6,700 sq. m. of leisure/cultural space; 7,400 new homes. The Cabinet reviewed the ten key objectives in detail and also noted the proposals in terms of spatial planning; indicative building heights and timescales.

The Cabinet welcome the scale and ambition of the vision for the centre of Slough and discussed various aspects of the Framework. Lead Members recognised that delivery of the masterplan was phased over 15 years and would depend on the speed at which private developers brought forward their schemes. The Council was delivering a range of its own schemes such as the hotel development and former Thames Valley University site which provided some early momentum to the vision. The Framework would help to provide an overarching strategy to help shape development and set out plans for the supporting infrastructure. This included improving the pedestrian links in the town centre with a new north/south desire line through opening up access to the station and seeking to address the physical division caused by the A4.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee has considered the Framework at its meeting held on 10th September and it had made a number of recommendations, as set out as follows:

- *“That Cabinet be recommended to approve that as part of making public transport the dominant mode of travel, provision be made to allow Hackney and Private Hire vehicles to use the A4 bus lane immediately along with the rest of Slough regeneration framework as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 of the report.*

Cabinet - 14.09.20

- *That Cabinet be recommended to consider that in taking the safety of residents into consideration during the lockdown to come into force on Monday 14th September and to encourage the use of sustainable transport for commuters travelling between Slough and Heathrow Airport, the bus lane along the A4 should only be operational during peak hours.*
- *That the concerns of the Committee regarding the following, be forwarded to Cabinet for consideration:*
 - *Lack of information provided in the Slough Regeneration Framework Masterplan in relation to transport, traffic congestion, and the impacts of regeneration on infrastructure, such as the provision of housing and health care.*
 - *The height of new buildings should be in-keeping with existing buildings within a locality. In particular, the height of new buildings in the Canal Basin area should be restricted to three/four storeys.”*

The Cabinet noted that some of the immediate matters referred by the Committee did not directly relate to the content of the Regeneration Framework, however, each point was considered in turn. The importance of developing a sustainable and efficient transport network to support the growth of the town centre was recognised and a new Transport Strategy was being prepared. It was due to be considered by Cabinet in December 2020 and in view of the interest of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee it was agreed that they should be able to consider and provide feedback on that strategy before it came to Cabinet for approval. In relation to the A4 bus and cycle lane introduced as part of the Covid response to provide more space for cyclists and pedestrians, the Cabinet agreed that it was important to consider the evidence and data gathered as part of the experimental scheme before taking decisions on issues such as future operating hours. The Leader and the Lead Member for Sustainable Transport had already arranged meetings with representatives of the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers bodies. The important contribution taxis made to the local transport system was acknowledged and the meetings would provide an opportunity to consider how they may be able to access the new lanes and agree a forward programme through those discussions that could be implemented for the life of the experimental scheme. In relation to the matter referred on building heights in the Canal Basin/Stoke Wharf, the Cabinet noted the comments and agreed this would be a matter to be addressed through the planning process.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Cabinet agreed the Slough Regeneration Framework and supporting recommendations.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Slough Regeneration Framework as set out in Appendices 1 & 2 be agreed;

Cabinet - 14.09.20

- (b) That it be noted that the Slough Regeneration Framework was a corporate vision statement rather than a statutory planning document; and
- (c) That it be noted that the Slough Regeneration Framework will be used to inform the emerging Local Plan Spatial Strategy and policies for the Centre of Slough and at this stage it would enter the public consultation process.
- (d) That the recommendations and comments of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee be noted and that the Cabinet's response be agreed as follows:
 - i. That the importance of developing a sustainable and reliable transport network to support the regeneration and growth of the town be recognised;
 - ii. That the emerging Transport Strategy be considered by the appropriate scrutiny committee or panel before being brought to Cabinet for decision in late 2020 or early 2021;
 - iii. That the issue raised that the height of new buildings sit within the context of their wider neighbourhood be shared in principle;
 - iv. That the concern raised in relation to the height of buildings in the Canal Basin be noted and that this would be a matter for the planning process to consider in accordance with planning policies;
 - v. That it be recognised that both the Hackney Carriage and Private Hire sectors have an important contribution to make towards the balanced transport system for the town.
 - vi. That the concerns of Hackney Carriage and Private Hire drivers about their potential use of the A4 bus lane be acknowledged and that it be noted that the Leader and the Lead Member for Sustainable Transport & Environmental Services had arranged to meet local representative bodies to consider how they may be able to access the bus lane in the future and agree a forward programme for period of the experimental scheme.

41. Stoke Wharf – Slough Urban Renewal – Draft Indicative Site Development Plan

The Cabinet considered a report that sought approval of the Draft Indicative Site Development Plan (DISDP) for Stoke Wharf, prepared by Slough Urban Renewal in partnership with Waterside Places.

The Council had had a longstanding ambition to develop the canal basin site in what had become the Stoke Wharf scheme. A high quality, mixed use scheme was proposed that drew upon the heritage of Slough and the Grand Union Canal. A total of 312 new homes were proposed which was a mix of apartments, mews and townhouses along with retail and leisure space. Parking on site was proposed to be minimised given the sustainable location.

Cabinet - 14.09.20

The Cabinet welcomed the creation of canal side public realm and improvements to Bowyer Park. There was a discussion about the possibility of a bridge across the canal and this was separate matter being taken forward by Officers with the Canal & River Trust as part of wider plans for the corridor. Members also highlighted the opportunity to increase the affordable housing offer as the scheme was further refined.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee had made a recommendation in relation to building heights (Minute 40 refers) and their comments were noted. Reducing building heights would impact on the viability of the scheme. It was agreed that this issue would be best addressed through the planning process. It was noted that the scheme had been subject to extensive consultation and no concerns had been raised about the building heights. The overwhelming response to the proposals had been positive.

At the conclusion of the discussion the DISDP was approved.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Draft Indicative Site Development Plan appended to the report be approved; and
- (b) That authority be delegated to the Director of Finance and Resources (s.151 officer), following consultation with the Leader, to relinquish a proportion of Slough Borough Council's anticipated profit share from Stoke Wharf Development LLP and vary any legal agreements necessary to ensure that the level of affordable housing delivered on the site moves further towards policy compliance.
- (c) That the recommendation of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee in relation to building heights be noted; and that such matters would be for the Planning Committee to consider and balance against viability and the scale of development.

42. Britwell Centre - GP Surgery Development

The Cabinet considered a report that sought approval of the business case for the remodelling of the Britwell Centre to incorporate the relocation of the Avenue GP practice. The scheme had been developed in accordance with the Localities Strategy, One Public Estate principles and the Five Year Plan.

The approach being proposed was part of the Council's commitment to deliver services in a coordinated way close to where residents lived. The current Avenue Medical Centre was delivering care to a population with high health needs. The relocation would provide larger premises and improved integration. The layout plans, as set out in Appendix 2 to the report, and the consequential impacts on other services such as the Slough Children's Services Trust Contact Centre were summarised. Part of the scheme would release land for new homes on the Britwell Clinic site. Representatives of East Berkshire CCG and the Avenue Medical Practice addressed the Cabinet

Cabinet - 14.09.20

to explain the anticipated health benefits and additional services that could be delivered through the proposal. The timetable was that subject to design and contracts the scheme would be completed by September 2021.

The Cabinet welcomed the aims of the scheme to integrate service and improve health care facilities in an area of high need. During the course of the discussion Lead Members noted that the new GP hub would be located where the community halls currently were placed. The community facilities would be reprovided and Members emphasised the importance of minimising disruption to users of the facility and that temporary alternative locations be found for community groups displaced during the works. Assurance was provided that officers would work with community groups to minimise disruption.

At the conclusion of the discussion the recommendations were agreed.

Resolved –

- (a) That the business case for the remodelling of Britwell Hub be approved.
- (b) That the relocation of Slough Children's Services Trust Contact Centre be approved.
- (c) That the revised timescales be noted.
- (d) That the programme set out in section 5.11 of the report be noted.
- (e) That progress be noted ahead of a final report due at the end of October requesting a decision to approve the final business case before progress to construction.

43. Covid-19 Decisions Update

Lead Members considered a follow up report to that received by the Cabinet in May, June and July which set out the significant decisions taken by officers in the ongoing response to the Covid-19 pandemic.

The appendix to the report summarised the decisions taken by Silver command since 26th June 2020. The relevant Lead Members had been consulted on decisions where appropriate. Appendix B which set out the Significant Decision in relation to the local implementation of the Health Protection (Coronavirus, Restrictions) (England) (Amendment) (No. 3) Regulations 2020 which related to 'local lockdowns'.

A report would also be provided to Council on 24th September to seek to ratify decisions relating to its functions. After due consideration the Cabinet noted the report and ratified the significant decisions relating to Executive functions.

Cabinet - 14.09.20

Resolved – That the report be noted, particularly paragraph 5.2, and that the significant decisions taken by officers since the previous meeting of Cabinet, as set out in the Appendices 1 and 2 to the report be ratified.

44. References from Overview & Scrutiny

References from the Overview & Scrutiny Committee made on 10th September were considered and responded to under items 7 (Centre of Slough Regeneration Framework – Minute 40) and 8 (Stoke Wharf Draft Indicative Site Development Plan – Minute 41).

There were no recommendations from any of the Scrutiny Panels.

Resolved – That the references from Overview & Scrutiny and the responses of the Cabinet be agreed as set out in items 7 and 8 (Minutes 40 and 41 refer)

45. Notification of Forthcoming Decisions

The Cabinet considered and endorsed the Notification of Key Decisions published on 14th August 2020 which set out the key decisions expected to be taken by the Cabinet over the next three months.

Resolved – That the published Notification of Key Decisions for the period between September to October 2020 be endorsed.

46. Exclusion of Press and Public

The Part II appendices for items 7 and 8 were considered and noted in taking the decisions during Part I of the agenda, without disclosing any of the exempt information.

Resolved – That the matters in Part II of the agenda be considered and resolved during Part I, without disclosing any of the exempt information, but that the Part II reports remain restricted as they 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 matters included in the Part II agenda.

47. Stoke Wharf – Slough Urban Renewal – Draft Indicative Site Development Plan Appendix

The Stoke Wharf Draft Indicative Site Development Plan (Appendix One to the Part I report) was noted.

Cabinet - 14.09.20

48. Britwell Centre - GP Surgery Development Appendices

The Financial Business Case for the GP Surgery Development at the Britwell Centre (Appendix One) and the general layout plan of the new Britwell Centre with a GP surgery (Appendix Two) were noted.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.32 pm and closed at 9.08 pm)