

Cabinet – Meeting held on Monday, 19th September, 2011.

Present:- Councillors Anderson, S Chaudhry, A S Dhaliwal, Matloob, Pantelic, Parmar, Swindlehurst and Walsh

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillors Plimmer, Basharat, Minhas, Sharif and Strutton

PART I

36. Declarations of Interest

None.

37. Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th July 2011

The minutes of the meeting held on 18th July 2011 were approved as a correct record.

38. Performance, Finance and Project Reporting for Monitoring to 31st July 2011

The Cabinet considered a report detailing the current financial position of the Council. A summary of each Directorates' spend, as at 31st July 2011, was provided. It was noted that an overspend of £23K was projected on the 2011/12 General Fund. The Cabinet was informed that the Housing revenue account had been subject to a pension fund adjustment and that, consequently, the balance stood at £9.454m, which was £294,000 higher than had been budgeted for.

In response to a question with regard to reviewing outstanding deposits of the Council, it was stated that credit ratings of new investments would be considered carefully; however it was difficult to amend the position of existing deposits, which had been placed prior to the economic down turn.

A monthly summary was provided with regard to the status of the ten Gold Projects. One new project, 'Safeguarding Improvement Plan', had been added to the list for the first time, in response to the recent Ofsted inspection of Safeguarding and Looked after Children Services.

Resolved –

- (a) That the current projected outturn position on the General Fund of an overspend of £32K be noted.
- (b) That that the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) reported a forecast surplus of £43K be noted.
- (c) That the identified areas of risk and emerging issues be noted.

- (d) That the revisions made to the format of the performance section of the report in line with the consultation carried out with members at the last Overview and Scrutiny committee be noted.
- (e) That the summary of the councils Council's Gold Projects status as at 31st July 2011 be noted.

39. Creation of the Slough Local Asset Backed Vehicle (LABV)

The Cabinet considered a report with regard to the creation of the Slough Local Asset Backed Vehicle (LABV) which detailed the findings of the Officers and Legal Advisors of Bevan Brittan LLP, who had explored the option of LABV in detail. Strategic Aims and Objectives were presented to the Cabinet, which focused on the regeneration activity and the Council's community leadership role. The Cabinet was requested to make a decision as to whether or not to begin the formal procurement process to create the LABV. It was noted that the complex nature of LABV would require costs of £210k for external advisors with a further £50k revenue funding allocated for internal specialist financial advice.

The Cabinet was informed that twelve other Local Authorities had either implemented, or were in the process of implementing, a LABV system. Nine of these Local Authorities had been consulted with, all of whom were of the opinion that LABV was one of the most effective commercial tools which could be applied to the public sector.

The Interim Assistant Director of Resources and Regeneration provided the Cabinet with an updated portfolio of the Council's property assets. The Cabinet were told that decisions with regard to which assets would fall within LABV would be made next year once the procurement process was underway.

The disposal of Langley Community Hall was agreed to.

Resolved –

- (a) To adopt the Regeneration Strategic Aims and Objectives for Slough in Section 3.7 and 3.8 of the report.
- (b) To proceed with the formal procurement process to create the Slough Local Asset Backed Vehicle (LABV) in accordance with the outline Project Plan set out in Section 3.59 and the candidate list of core projects in Appendix 2 of the report;
- (c) That in recognition of the need to make timely decisions to comply with the procurement timetable in the outline Project Plan:
 - I. To require the Director of Resources and Regeneration to proceed to the next phase of the LABV procurement and to delegate to Officers in consultation with the Member led

Development Panel (see (b) below) the delivery of the LABV procurement including stages 1 – 7 in Section 3.59 of the report and to report back to Cabinet by or before September 2012.

- II. To create a Member led LABV Development Panel for consultation on decisions to issue all procurement and legal documentation, with a membership of:
 - i. The Leader of the Council and Commissioner of Finance & Strategy;
 - ii. Deputy Leader and Commissioner for Neighbourhoods & Renewal;
 - iii. Commissioner for Performance & Accountability;
 - III. To receive a report back to Cabinet in September 2012, or earlier if practical, for the decision to proceed further with the LABV following the outcome of the OJEU procurement process and the selection of a preferred bidder.
 - IV. To receive a revised and resubmitted capital programme to take account of proceeding to procure a LABV, as part of the 2012/13 Budget Preparation Report to the October 2011 Cabinet meeting.
- (d) To approve the revised Asset Management Plan asset categorisation in Appendix 1 of the report.
 - (e) That in recognition of the strategic importance of the LABV, that the project be assigned “gold project” status and subject to regular reports to Scrutiny and Cabinet.
 - (f) That costs of £210k for external advisors with a further £50k revenue funding allocated for internal specialist financial modelling resource be noted.
 - (g) That the Interim Assistant Director of Environment and Regeneration proceed with the disposal of Langley Community Hall.

40. Britwell Regeneration Scheme - From Concept to Reality

The Interim Director of Environment and Regeneration provided the Cabinet with a progress report regarding the Britwell Regeneration Scheme. The Cabinet was informed that an options appraisal had been carried out to assess the needs of the community, the result of which identified Wentworth Industrial Estate/Old Rent Office buildings as being the most appropriate location for the Britwell Community Hub. It was noted that the Britwell Community Hub would result in a favourable increase in facilities within Britwell and would therefore be sufficient in terms of community buildings.

It was noted that it would not be financially sound to acquire the Northborough Road Landfill site through direct purchase, due to the potential on-going financial liabilities which would exceed the benefit of acquiring the site. It was

proposed that as an alternative, the Council would intend to lease the land ensuring it would be available for public use, whilst also obtaining a Deed of Agreement that would protect the Council against any financial risks arising from the site.

Resolved –

- (a) That the progress reported as set out in Appendix B to the report be noted.
- (b) That the options appraisal presented in Section 5.9 and Appendix C of the Report be noted and to confirm that other than providing the new Britwell Community Hub and a facility for the Guides & Scouts, no further community building will be provided as part of the Britwell Regeneration Scheme.
- (c) That the Northborough Road landfill site should not be acquired through direct purchase. But the Interim Assistant Director, Environment & Regeneration be requested to seek a long-term lease from the owner of the Northborough Road site that will secure public access to the site, but with a Deed of Agreement that safeguards the Council against the potential financial risk associated with the landfill liabilities of the site.
- (d) That a further update report be made to the Cabinet meeting on 17th October 2011.

41. Libraries Strategy

The Assistant Director of Culture and Skills, presented a report detailing the development of the Libraries Strategy since September 2009. It was noted that since this time there had been over 100 percent increase in the opening hours of Slough's libraries, whilst the cost to Slough's residents had decreased by 25 percent. The Cabinet was informed that a Satellite library opened in Chalvey in July 2011 and two additional satellite libraries were planned for Colnbrook and Wexham the following autumn.

Significant benefits had arisen as a result of the Strategic Partnership with Essex Library Services, including a wider range of services and additional support for events, as a result of the materials provided by Essex Library. The Cabinet was also informed that the Home Library service was to be integrated into the mainstream library as of October 2011.

Resolved –

- (a) That the service improvements achieved since 2009 be noted.
- (b) That the priorities for the next stage of implementation of the libraries strategy set out in section 6.4 of the report be agreed.

42. Outcome of Town Hall Tender Process

The Cabinet was informed that the top ten scoring contractors had been invited to submit tenders with regard to the refurbishment of the Town Hall in order to deliver a new school for Chalvey Ward for the following seven years. The Interim Assistant Director of Environment and Regeneration informed the Cabinet that a decision was required with regard to the appointment of a preferred supplier.

The Cabinet were provided with a presentation from Mansell Construction Services Limited, who had been successful during the first tender stage, detailing their proposals for the developments.

Resolved –

That the Press and the Public be excluded from the meeting during consideration of the remainder of this item, as it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) as defined in Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972 (amended)

(The following is a summary of the debate in Part II)

The Cabinet discussed the possible options available for progressing the Town Hall refurbishment and detailed information on the budgetary implications of the project. The Cabinet agreed that Mansell Construction Services Ltd be appointed as the preferred developed of the Town Hall Conversion and Refurbishment on terms detailed in the Part II minute.

43. Highway Changes in Chalvey - Update Report

The Cabinet was presented with a report detailing the progress with regard to the implementation of the highway changes in Chalvey, which had been considered by the Cabinet, previously, in July 2011. The Cabinet was informed that on 11th August, a protest had been held of between 100 – 150 members of the public, who supported the highway trials, however called for the Council not to completely close Chalvey Road West to all traffic.

In response to this protest, it was decided by Officers, that Chalvey Road West would not be fully pedestrianised, but rather a one way system would be implemented. Work would begin once work being carried out by Thames Valley Water had ceased, although it was noted that the Council was unable to state exactly when this would be, as Thames Water Valley had already exceeded the original completion date they had provided.

Public consultation would take place between September and November 2011, at which point members of the Chalvey community would be provided with further details as to the Council's plans and approximate time scales. Further consultation would be carried out by consulting approximately 30

groups and organisations, that Officers were aware existed within the community, between November 2011 and February 2012.

Resolved –

- a) That the response to feedback from the Chalvey community be noted and that a one-way system will be implemented in Chalvey Road West, with new parking provided for shoppers. This is in place of the full closure and pedestrianisation that was first considered.
- b) That an update report be submitted to Cabinet in December 2011, when it is anticipated that the experimental measures will be installed on site.

44. Local Pay Award 2011/2012 - Payment of £250 for Staff Earning Below £21,000 PA

The Cabinet was presented with a report proposing that full time employees paid less than £21,000 would be paid £250 as an addition to their salary for the financial year of 2011-12. This had been initially proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer in June 2010 when it was requested that the public sector accept a two year pay freeze, however the Treasury had since stated that this additional pay would only be applicable to workforces under ministerial control or covered by pay review bodies.

The Cabinet was requested to honour the initial proposal and to pay the estimated 300 staff, who were employed by the Council and earning less than £21,000, the additional £250 for the financial year.

Resolved –

- (a) That a local pay award of £250 for all centrally employed staff whose full time salary is below £21,000 per annum be approved.
- (b) That the operational details of the arrangements for these payments be determined by the Chief Executive as Head of Paid Service in consultation with the Director of Resources and Regeneration and AD Professional Services. [The payments will be made using the established pay award arrangements and principles for dealing with starters and leavers and pro rota payments].
- (c) That the Schools Forum ask schools to consider whether they would be prepared to make a similar award to school based staff.

45. References from Overview and Scrutiny

None.

46. Executive Forward Plan

Resolved:

That the Executive Forward Plan be approved.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 10.30 pm)