

Cabinet – Meeting held on Monday, 17th September, 2018.

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

Also present under Rule 30:- Councillors Smith and Wright

Apologies for Absence:- None.

PART 1

37. Declarations of Interest

None were declared.

38. Minutes of the Meeting held on 16th July 2018

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 16th July 2018 be approved as a correct record.

39. Performance & Projects Report Q1 2018/19

The Performance & Information Manager and the Programme Management Lead gave a presentation on the latest performance information for the first quarter of 2018/19; updated on the progress of key projects and delivery against manifesto commitments.

Almost two-thirds (64.7%) of the Council's selected performance indicators were achieving the desired results and were rated 'green' with a further 23.5% of other indicators close to target. Whilst good progress was being made overall, it was noted that the indicator relating to households in temporary accommodation remained 'red' and there had been a deterioration in the in year collection rate of Business Rates. More than two-thirds (68%) of Council projects were rated 'green' and four-fifths (80.7%) of manifesto pledges were 'green'. The new reporting format would make it easier to track the progress of delivery throughout the year and the Cabinet welcomed the presentational improvements to the report.

Lead Members asked a number of questions about the progress of specific indicators and projects where delivery was not on track and assurance was provided that action had been taken to address issues that had arisen. At the conclusion of the discussion the 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 the manifesto commitments and performance be noted.

40. Revenue Budget Monitor Report - 2018-19 (Quarter 1)

The Service Lead Finance introduced a report that provided the Cabinet with an update on the financial position of the Council's revenue account for the first quarter of the year to the end of June 2018. Approval was also sought for write off requests and virements.

There was an overall reported underspend of £1m for the period which was primarily due to late and disputed invoices in the Regeneration directorate which were expected to be resolved in the next quarter. The position for each Directorate, including any significant variances, pressures and management action, were summarised and noted. The main budget pressures continued to be in adult and children's social care services and temporary accommodation. The Housing Revenue Account was on budget.

The Cabinet considered and approved the write off and virement requests set out in paragraphs 6 and 7 of the report. An addendum had been circulated that sought approval for a new mobile telephony contract. This was approved.

Lead Members recognised the continuing financial pressures facing local authorities and discussed the process being undertaken in Slough to develop the Medium Term Financial Strategy and revenue budget for 2019/20. This included Star Chambers to examine proposals for savings and growth in directorates and the outcomes would be reported at future meetings of the Cabinet.

Resolved –

- (a) That the reported and underlying financial position of the Council as at the first quarter of the year be noted,
- (b) That the management actions being undertaken by officers to reduce the budget pressures be noted,
- (c) That the budget virements as explained in paragraph 6 of the report and listed in detail in appendix D be approved, and
- (d) That the write offs as requested in paragraph 7 of the report be approved.
- (e) That the Mobile Telephony Contract proposal as at paragraph 7.3 of the addendum to the report be approved, which would result in SBC making a spend commitment of £755k over 4 years to the new VMB/O2 contract, noting that the cost would be met from existing budgets).

41. Capital Monitoring Report at 30th June and Approval of Revised Capital Budgets 2018-19

The Service Lead Finance introduced a report that provided the Cabinet with a summary of spend against capital budgets for the first quarter of the year and to approve the revised capital budget for 2018/19.

The Council had approved a revised capital budget at its meeting on 7th June 2018, primarily to acquire a new Council headquarters and to invest in additional strategic acquisitions. The revised capital budget for 2018/19 was £243m and the projected outturn was £224m. The Cabinet noted the slippage of some school expansion projects and Housing Revenue Account schemes. The forecast slippage of 8% was very low compared to previous years and the overall programme was on track.

The Cabinet noted the update for the first quarter of the year and approved the revised budgets.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Capital activities for the first three months of 2018/19 as set out in the body of the report be noted.
- (b) That the revised Capital Budgets for 2018-19 as set out in the report be approved.

42. Low Emission Strategy

The Lead Member for Environment & Leisure and the Environmental Quality Team Manager gave a detailed presentation on the Slough Low Emission Strategy (LES) which formed part of the Slough Air Quality Action Plan. The Cabinet was asked to recommend the strategy to full Council for approval.

The LES set out a plan to improve air quality over the period to 2025 through a reduction in vehicle emissions by accelerating the uptake of cleaner fuels and technologies. Slough experienced elevated levels of air pollution, which had significant negative health impacts on local people with 47 attributable deaths in the most recent year and contributed to a range of other health conditions. The Lead Member stated that the adoption of the strategy would be 'the end of the beginning', to be followed by an action plan and a package of measures to improve air quality.

The Council was already taking action and had designated 5 Air Quality Management Areas (AQMA) where levels were being breached and levels in Langley may require a new AQMA in the future. Lead Members discussed some of the current and future actions which included an increase in electric charging points in the borough; electric pool cars for Council use; the use of vehicles meeting the latest Euro VI emission standards for the waste and recycling fleet; vehicle emission standards for taxi and private hire drivers;

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and the feasibility of a Clean Air Zone to potentially set emission standards for taxis, buses, coaches, lorries and vans in key areas.

The Cabinet recognised that air pollution was a major public health issue for Slough and reaffirmed its commitment to play a leadership role in addressing the problems caused by vehicle emissions. Approving the strategy would set a high level of ambition and would be a platform for a Low Emission Programme to improve air quality, reduce health impacts and attract investment.

Speaking under Rule 30, Councillor Smith welcomed the principle of the strategy and encouraged the Cabinet to “go further, faster” and an extension to the London Low Emission Zone (LEZ) into Brands Hill and Colnbrook was suggested. In response, the Leader provided assurance that the ambitious strategy would be backed by further action to provide cleaner air and the Officer commented that the LEZ standard was currently to Euro IV and the Council’s ambition was to set a higher standard.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Cabinet welcomed the work that had been undertaken to develop the LES and agreed to recommend its approval to full Council on 27th September 2018.

Recommended – That the Low Emission Strategy be approved.

43. Slough's School Places Strategy 2018-2023

The Lead Member for Children & Education introduced the School Places Strategy 2018/2023, which set out the Council’s proposals for ensuring that there were sufficient, suitable, high quality school places for every resident child and young person over the next five years. It was noted that between 2001/02 and 2010/11 the number of births in Slough rose by 48% and the impact of this growth together with the inward migration levels to the town had required a major expansion in provision across all education sectors.

Details of developments relating to primary and secondary places were highlighted. The opening of the Grove Academy in 2017 had meant that Slough had sufficient Reception classes to meet projected demand and provide some surplus capacity. In terms of secondary school places, a number of free schools had opened in recent years which would provide for 22 new forms of entry.

The Principal Asset Manager reported that there had been a significant increase in the number of children and young people who had a statutory plan for educational needs – Education and Health Care Plan. It was noted that the growth in pupils with Special Education Needs and Disabilities would be funded from the High Needs Block by the Department for Education.

Members discussed the capital implications regarding the provision of school places and noted that £51m was required to build the school places required to 2023. £21m of income was confirmed either as section 106 developer

contributions or Basic Need Grant. Over the period of the strategy further section 106 contributions and 2 new annual allocations of Basic Need were expected in 2021 and 2022 and the balance of the programme would be funded by the Council from borrowing.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the School Places Strategy was approved.

Resolved – That the School Places Strategy 2018-2023 be approved.

44. Resilient Network Plan Update - DfT Incentive Fund Self Assessment Submission

The Team Leader, Highway Maintenance and Asset Management introduced a report that sought approval for the Resilient Network Plan relating to flooding which was part of the Council's submission to the Department for Transport's (DfT) Incentive Fund.

The Council was considered to have performed well during previous flood events and the Resilient Network Plan clarified what needed to be done during such events in the future. It was a requirement as part of submissions to the Incentive Fund to have an agreed process in place to mitigate heavy rainfall and flooding. Cabinet approval was required to achieve Band 3 status which would help the Council secure the maximum available level of DfT funding. After due consideration, the Cabinet welcomed the work that had been undertaken and approved the Resilient Network Plan.

Resolved – That the Resilient Network Plan be approved.

45. Private Rented Property Licensing - Review of Mandatory Licensing Fees, Options for Extending Property Licensing and Consultation Proposals

The Lead Member for Corporate Finance & Housing introduced a report that proposed a series of measures intended to strengthen private rented property licensing.

The proposals included the commencement of a statutory consultation on the borough wide additional licensing scheme for all Houses of Multiple Occupation and a consultation on introducing a targeted selective licensing scheme for private rented single households in Central and Chalvey wards. The licensing would ensure a more effective policy framework, give more protection for vulnerable tenants and provide private tenants in licensed properties more rights such as written tenancy agreements and greater protection against eviction.

Lead Members recognised that private rented accommodation was an important part of the mix of housing, and it was estimated there were 3,509 HMOs in Slough. The Cabinet agreed that feedback from the pilot work had been positive and agreed that moving forward with the consultation would

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make further progress to strengthen the regulation of the private rented sector to improve protections and standards.

Speaking under Rule 30, Councillor Wright welcomed the consultation and asked how the Council would ensure it was carried out effectively. The Housing Regulation Manager explained the approach that would be taken and highlighted that the Council had a duty to gather the views of tenants, landlords, agents and residents as part of the process.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the recommendations were agreed.

Resolved –

- (a) That authorisation be given to commence a consultation on a borough wide Additional Licensing Scheme.
- (b) That authorisation be given to commence a consultation on a Selective Licensing Scheme for the Central and Chalvey wards.
- (c) That the revised Mandatory HMO licensing fee structure be approved.
- (d) That it be noted that the results of the consultations would be presented to Cabinet in early 2019.

46. Brexit Impact Assessment

The Service Lead Strategy & Performance introduced a report that set out the assessment of the potential impacts of Brexit on Slough and on the Council's operations. An addendum had been circulated which clarified some of the figures in the report relating to EU procurement.

Under the terms of Article 50, the UK would leave the EU on 29th March 2019 and whilst the outcome of negotiations between the UK and EU remained uncertain, the possibility of a 'no deal' Brexit was a risk. The Council had therefore conducted a high level impact assessment utilising LGA research, intelligence and internal discussions. The impact assessment and the draft risk analysis and contingency table at Appendix B to the report set out some of the potential issues the Council may face in terms of finance, regeneration, workforce and population. Officers would continue to monitor and update the assessment as appropriate in the coming months.

Lead Members welcomed the work that had been undertaken and commented that it identified a number of practical issues that the Council may need to consider such as the electoral franchise for EU nationals and impact on the workforce in areas such as the care sector. The Cabinet noted that the 19 impacts initially identified that only 2 were considered to be 'positive'.

Speaking under Rule 30, Councillor Wright asked about the levels of European funding received by the Council. It was responded that a variety of organisations and businesses in Slough had received European funding and

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further information would be provided on the funding received by the Council. At the conclusion of the discussion, the report was noted.

Resolved –

- (a) That the summary of potential impacts identified at section 5.6 of the report be noted; and
- (b) The draft risk and contingency table at Appendix B of the report and next steps be noted.

47. References from Overview & Scrutiny

There were no references from Overview & Scrutiny.

48. Notification of Forthcoming Decisions

The Cabinet considered and endorsed the Notification of Key Decisions published on 17th August 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 Key Decisions for the period between September to November 2018 be endorsed.

49. 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.

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

50. Part II Minutes - 16th July 2018

Resolved – That the Part II minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 16th July 2018 be approved.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.32 pm and closed at 8.41 pm)