

## CABINET

THURSDAY, 28 SEPTEMBER 2017

PRESENT: Councillors Simon Dudley (Chairman), David Coppinger (Vice-Chairman), Carwyn Cox, Derek Wilson, MJ Saunders, Samantha Rayner, Jack Rankin and David Evans

Principal and Deputy Lead Members also in attendance: Christine Bateson, Lisa Targowska, Stuart Carroll, David Hilton, Ross McWilliams and Marius Gilmore

Officers: Alison Alexander, Rob Stubbs, Louisa Dean, Mary Kilner, Russell O'Keefe, Karen Shepherd, Andy Jeffs and Kevin McDaniel

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors N. Airey and Bicknell.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor S. Rayner commented that her family were farmers and had a long association with BCA. The Rayner farms currently had two apprentices from BCA. Her daughter had recently started a young farmers association in conjunction with BCA. .

### MINUTES

#### **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That:**

- i) The Part I minutes of the meeting held on 24 August 2017 be approved.**
- ii) The Part I minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet Regeneration Sub Committee held on 5 September 2017 be noted.**

### APPOINTMENTS

The Chairman announced that, following feedback from the recent LGA Peer Review, the council would be strengthening its economic development resources with the appointment of a new Business Development Partnerships Manager. Members noted that Councillor Gilmore was also to be appointed Deputy Lead Member for Business Development and Partnerships.

### QUESTIONS FROM BCA STUDENTS

Cabinet received questions from pupils of Berkshire College of Agriculture (BCA).

Niamh Bulbeck asked the following question: There is going to be a new hospice built by Bray Lake which is a level 3 flood plane. How did the environment sector allow this to be developed? I live across from the site and it floods every year.

The Lead Member for Planning explained that planning permission had been granted for the relocation and expansion of the Thames Hospice, currently based in Windsor, together with the amalgamation with the Paul Bevan Hospice which was at the Heatherwood site in Ascot. The site was located on land south of Bray Lake, the

wider site was one of the sites identified in the emerging Borough Local Plan (BLP) for housing and specialist housing. The Hospice fell into the specialist housing bracket.

Flood zones were shown on the Strategic Flood Risk Assessment maps. In Flood Zone 1, 2 and 3A residential development can be permitted; in zone 3A it had to pass some technical tests to show that there was not another suitable site available and that a safe means of escape in the event of a flood was possible. This had been done through a Flood Risk Assessment.

The site was actually located in flood zones 1, 2 and 3. None of the building would be located in flood zone 3, it was mostly located in flood zone 2. The building had been designed to be flood resilient and the floor levels had been set to reduce the risk of the actual building itself flooding. An escape route had also been identified through the flood zone. Given the vulnerability of the users the applicant was expected to devise a Flood Management Plan. The Council was satisfied that this would ensure that no one was put in danger from flooding.

In addition to flooding the application showed that drainage would be dealt with on site through a sustainable drainage system. Some water would be discharged into the lake however parts of the site had been designed to be floodable during a flood event.

By way of a supplementary question, Niamh Bulbeck stated that the plans showed floodwater would be drained back into Bray Lake. However this flooded so how could it be planned to drain back into the lake?

The Lead Member for Planning agreed to provide Ms Bulbeck with a written response to her supplementary question. He was sure that the issue would have been taken into account by the Flood Risk Assessment.

Niamh Bulbeck asked the following question: In the next few years my friends and I might be looking into moving out of our family homes and into houses or apartments of our own however this isn't possible with houses being the prices they are. Is there any way of making houses and apartments move affordable to young people to buy or to rent?

The Deputy Lead Member for Policy and Affordable Housing commented that this was one of the biggest conundrums faced by local authorities, who needed to be imaginative and innovative in terms of the products provided in response. At present any development of more than 15 units was required to provide 30% affordable housing; this would be down to 10 units in the Borough Local Plan. When considering what was 'affordable' it was important to think about different products (such as Shared Ownership) rather than simply a reduction in rent or land value. Surrey was currently building a lot of affordable homes and it was possible to purchase a property valued at £420,000 with a 25% share of £105,000.

The Secretary of State was undertaking a review of social housing, in the wake of the Grenfell disaster. In the 1950s the government was building 2 million homes per annum, however vested interests in the market had significantly slowed this rate over the years. With the Joint Venture and BLP the council was demonstrating it was fully committed to do all in its powers to generate the building of affordable homes. Once the Local Plan was adopted, the council's housing and planning teams would work together to produce a supplementary planning document which would set out the mix

between ownership and rent to buy. When affordable homes were delivered as part of a planning permission, the council entered into an agreement with the developer which set the number of affordable homes, the mix, and the tenures. Usually the council would also seek an agreement which enabled residents in this Borough to have first call on those properties.

By way of a supplementary question, Niamh Bulbeck asked how the loopholes used by developers to avoid including affordable housing could be closed?

The Chairman responded that the council's planning policy was to require 30% but developers often cited viability issues. The large Boulter's Lock development in his ward was one example, and this had unfortunately been approved by the Inspector without affordable housing. Where private markets were broken, the state had to intervene. This would happen over the next few years, with the state becoming the enabler for house building.

Christine Gray asked the following question: The agriculture industry is facing a large and growing skilled labour shortage. How will the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead ensure that the agriculture is properly portrayed in local schools as a professional STEM subject area, with career opportunities at all levels?

The Lead Member for School Improvement explained that he had grown up on a smallholding in Wales. His brother had attended an agricultural college, which had enabled him to grow the smallholding and become an entrepreneur. The courses on offer at BCA were interesting and full of opportunity; it was unlikely that a robot would be able to do such jobs in the future. The council needed to get the message across about the importance of STEM subjects. When the borough met with teachers to discuss the curriculum, it needed to be more proactive about the opportunities available.

Christine Gray asked the following question, on behalf of Luke Boughey: Brexit looks set to substantially change the support provided to farmers in the UK. What support is the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead providing to help local businesses adapt and prepare for the unknown changes ahead?

The Lead Member for Economic Development, Property and Deputy Finance explained that leaving the EU had introduced uncertainty into the economy. This was of course outside the council control however he had been pleased to hear there had been some progress in Brexit discussions in recent days. The council could take action locally in two areas: communication and infrastructure. In terms of communication, it had already been announced that the council was planning to invest in its economic development resources. The council interacted with parishes in a number of forums, many of whom were more closely linked to the rural parishes than those at the Town Hall. At a recent event at Rinders Farm members of the Rural Forum commented that the discussions at the Forum were valued, but did not always run through to council policy. In terms of infrastructure, he was the council representative on the Thames Valley Local Enterprise Partnership (LEP), which was investing in Superfast Broadband and the Solutions Lab.

Maggie Walker asked the following question: One of your manifesto commitments is to: 'Support the rural economy and agriculture by adopting policies that have worked elsewhere'. Apart from Superfast Broadband, what policies are you adopting?

The Principal Member for Neighbourhood Planning, Ascot & the Sunnings responded that the ongoing support the Royal Borough provided for local Farmers Markets provided opportunities to local farmers and businesses to access a direct marketplace of local people and visitors. The council would continue to work in partnership with the Local Enterprise Partnership to actively seek to secure additional project funding which could support initiatives such as Enterprise Hubs. This would help start-up and emerging businesses and seek to link these with the wider programme of regeneration the Borough had embarked upon.

Sean Keating-Bell asked the following question, on behalf of Claire Hutchinson: As a volunteer youth worker, I am concerned that not enough of my peers appreciate the value of building up their experience and enhancing their CV. How can you encourage more young people to get involved in volunteering?

The Lead Member for Culture and Communities commented that employers looked for more than just a good academic record: they wanted to see wider interest, commitment and collaboration. Many young people in the Borough were on programmes like the Duke of Edinburgh's award which combined volunteering commitments with personal skill development. The council did encourage volunteering through its youth services, with over half of the sessions being supported by volunteers. Youth services would be happy to visit any local sixth form or college to explain how young people could take part and she would ask the Director of Children's Services to write out to Ms May and other leaders. Through the partner organisation 'WAM Get Involved' the council had access to 5000 volunteers, which added £16m in added value to the borough. There were currently 305 separate volunteering opportunities offered by a range of local organisations.

By way of a supplementary question, Sean Keating-Bell commented that one reason young people did not take up volunteering was because finance was often a big issue, particularly for overseas volunteering. Were there any plans to lower the costs?

The Lead Member for Culture and Communities commented that the council did not set the costs for such schemes, however there were a number of trusts supported by the council that offered grants for such programmes. The Lead Member for Maidenhead Regeneration and Maidenhead highlighted such a fund for those living in the Waltham St Lawrence and Shurlock Row area.

Stuart Kerr asked the following question: There seems to have been a reduction in facilities for young people in the area in recent years which has a negative affect on 'anti-social' behaviour. How can we tackle this problem?

The Lead Member for Environmental Services explained that the council continued to invest in youth clubs with services for 8 to 18 year olds delivered in Pinkneys Green, Larchfield, Marlow Road as well as centres in Ascot and Windsor. These services were open to all, including three nights a week in Maidenhead town centre. In addition to youth services there were facilities for 'turn up and play' in leisure centres at Cox Green, Furze Platt, Magnet and soon the Braywick Leisure Centre. These centres offered facilities for aerobics, Zumba, Spinning, badminton, squash, table tennis, football, basketball, swimming, gym workouts, spa relaxation, Pilates, yoga, and much more.

In addition to council provided services there were many sports clubs that welcomed young people of all abilities, to take part in a broad range of sports , both indoor and

outdoor, including rowing, Tae Kwon Do, football, rugby, athletics, Park Run, cricket, hockey, swimming and roller disco. The council's sports development team offered targeted support for clubs to recruit new members and ran two events a year called 'Fit for Life' weeks where free sessions were offered to local residents by local sports clubs. From 2-8 October 2017 it was running a "Girls get Going" set of activities. Finally of course, the borough was well served with parks and green spaces.

The council did not have evidence of an increase in anti social behaviour, however if young people were concerned and there was a perception of a problem, the council needed to know. Young people could raise any issues with Community Wardens, so the council could work with the community to address any underlying issues.

The Chairman invited the young people present to write to the Cabinet with suggestions about what could be included in the town centre as it was being redeveloped.

Adam Robinson asked the following question: There isn't much to do for young people in the Maidenhead area. How will the proposed relocation of the Magnet Leisure Centre to Braywick Park help and what else can be done to keep young people occupied?

The Lead Member for Culture and Communities explained that the new Braywick Leisure Centre would allow the whole Braywick site to become more of a sports and leisure hub including the rugby club, the athletics club, SportsAble and more all alongside the new state of the art leisure centre. The Leisure Centre would also provide a better 'clubhouse area' for clubs using Braywick. The pool area was designed for all ages including a competition pool. The event hall would be available for drama and music. Outdoor courts would be available for football and netball. Film showings would be possible in the sports hall. The outdoor piazza could hold concerts. The Lead Member requested young people to tell the council what other facilities they would like.

## FORWARD PLAN

Cabinet considered the contents of the Forward Plan for the next four months and noted the changes that had been made to the plan since the last meeting. In addition it was noted that:

- The item 'SEND statement of Action Update' would be presented to Cabinet in November 2017.
- The item '2018/19 Budget Preparation,' currently listed for October 2017, would be deferred to November 2017.
- The item 'Maidenhead Golf Club' would be presented to Cabinet Regeneration Sub Committee on 30 October 2017.

## CABINET MEMBERS' REPORTS

### A) COUNCIL MANIFESTO TRACKER

Members considered progress against the administration's 137 manifesto commitments. The Chairman explained that following feedback from the LGA Peer

Review that the report was a political one, this would be the last time the report would be presented to Cabinet. However, monitoring and review would continue to ensure services to residents were improved and enhanced.

The Deputy Lead Member for Manifesto Delivery highlighted that 41% of commitments were met, with a further 57% on target. Since the last report a further 29 targets had been met. Members noted the actions proposed to deal with the three commitments were either just short or not met, as detailed in table 2 of the report. He thanked officers for their meticulous work in preparing the report.

The Director of Children's Services commented that the approach of local advertising for foster carers had brought a number of families to the door. Feedback was that foster carers needed more support when children were in crisis. Support was now provided with on-call officers until midnight Monday-Friday and at weekends. Two more families were expected to be approved by the end of the year. In relation to the attainment gap, he explained that progress would be shown by the results from the summer 2017 examinations, which would not come out in standardised form until the new year. Indications for Key Stage 1 and Early Years was for an improvement for disadvantaged pupils greater than for all pupils.

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Cabinet:**

**i) Notes the progress in delivering the manifesto commitments.**

**B) UPDATE ON POOL CARS AND ELECTRIC VEHICLE CHARGING POINTS**

Members considered recommendations in relation to the pool cars leased by the Royal Borough and Electric Vehicle Charging points.

The Lead Member for Adult Services explained that the council currently had a fleet of 13 petrol Minis. The proposal was to move to electric or hybrid vehicles without losing the benefit of keyless access. During the next year BMW had confirmed more vehicles would offer this benefit. The proposal was to equip the fleet with up to 10 vehicles which took into account the new delivery model in the council. In addition, officers would be encouraged to use the new cars; this would be moved forward with HR. Officers would work with ward members and residents on identifying locations for charging points.

The Lead Member referred Cabinet to the comments from the Overview and Scrutiny Panels. In relation to the request for a further cost/benefit analysis, he explained this would not be necessary as a third party would be running the scheme on behalf of the council. He explained that whilst it may not have been widely publicised, the council's pool car scheme had been open to Members for some time.

The Principal Member for HR, Legal and IT commented that as Chairman of the Employment Panel, she was supportive of the proposals to ensure staff used the pool cars. It was confirmed that the car club would ultimately be based in the Broadway car park following the redevelopment. It was noted that residents were able to pay for charging electric vehicles via a key-in code which was then charged centrally. The Chairman referred to a useful app called Podpoint. A fast charger could charge a vehicle in 30-40 minutes whereas a slow charger could take some hours. This was one of the issues for discussion with Members and residents. The new leisure centre would include 6 charging points, with the capacity for 200 more.

The Lead Member for Maidenhead Regeneration and Maidenhead commented that the report went to three Overview and Scrutiny Panels; there was a need to modernise the system. The Chairman commented that this would be addressed as part of the Boundary Review for May 2019.

The Deputy Lead Member for Ascot Regeneration commented that the announcement that Dyson was to enter the electric car market demonstrated the direction of travel in the market. It was noted that an electric charging point could cost up to £850 to install in a home, although government grants were available. It was suggested that the inclusion of charging points in all new homes built as part of the Joint Venture could be required.

**RECOMMENDATION: That Cabinet notes the report and:**

**i) Delegates authority to the Executive Director in conjunction with the Lead Member for Adult Services, Health and Sustainability, and the Deputy Leader of the Council and the Lead Member for Highways and Transport to:**

**a. procure a new electric / hybrid pool car fleet of up to 10 cars**

**b. recommend to Employment Panel that new travel policies seeking to increase pool car use are adopted and embedded**

**c. identify a partner and develop a 'pilot' car club scheme**

**d. develop an on-street electric vehicle charging programme; consult with Ward Members; seek grant funding; procure a supplier and install**

**c) HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY 2017-2022**

Members considered the council's Homelessness Strategy under the Homelessness Act 2002 which must be reviewed and refreshed every five years. The Deputy Lead Member commented that the Homelessness Reduction Act focussed on prevention rather than crisis management. The council provided temporary accommodation at a number of locations including John West House. The in-house team was working with various charities such as the CAB to provide other services such as debt management.

The strategy was the first of three stages, which included the completion of the BLP and the production of an SPD on Affordable Housing. The overall ambition was to provide opportunities for all to have a home of their own and home ownership for those that wanted it. As a member of the Housing Association he was aware that one of the biggest problems was the lack of affordable rented properties. The inclusion of a 30% requirement for affordable housing in the BLP would open up opportunities to expand social housing. This would feed into stopping homelessness.

The Deputy Lead Member for Ascot Regeneration highlighted that the strategy offered opportunities to build relationships with landlords and increase the availability of affordable private rented accommodation. Members of the Planning and Housing Overview and Scrutiny Panel had been sceptical about the delivery of 30% affordable housing. Based on past delivery this was understandable. However the emerging BLP

would dramatically change the development landscape. It would be important to ensure robustness on the issues of affordability and viability.

The Lead Member for Culture and Communities thanked the Head of Customer Services and her team who worked to prevent people from becoming homeless. The Chairman requested that the deposit loan scheme for rented accommodation be more prominently advertised on the borough website.

The Chairman requested that the Forward Plan be amended so that the report 'Options for Community Land Trust' was listed in the name of himself and the Deputy Lead Member for Policy and Affordable Housing.

The Lead Member for Finance commented that in such an affluent borough homelessness could be seen as a minor or modest issue. However it was often said that a civilised society was judged on the way it looked after the most vulnerable. The council's determination to ensure homelessness remained a priority was to its credit.

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Cabinet notes the report and:**

**i) Approves the Homelessness Strategy 2017-2022 for publication.**

D) FINANCIAL UPDATE

Members considered the latest financial update. The Lead Member explained that during the course of recent months the council had experienced a number of challenges largely driven by increases in demand and volume of the needs of some of the most needy residents, that had exceeded budgeted expectations. Across a number of issues the £2.5m buffer built into the budget had been largely eaten up. It had therefore been essential for Lead Members and lead officers to carefully evaluate the situation and seek to ensure all opportunities for savings or favourable revisions of forecast costs were identified. This had resulted in an impressive expectation against a demanding budget, that a balanced position would be reached at year end without the need to utilise any of the buffer.

The Lead Member explained that prior to the transfer to Achieving for Children (AfC), the council would have funded working capital requirements. The second recommendation reflected the need to transfer this facility to AfC. The maximum was set at £11.7m but in reality the maximum use so far had been £3.5m. In relation to the third recommendation, the Lead Member explained that following the finalisation of relevant government grants in education, officers and Lead Members were satisfied that although funding had reduced, there was no anticipated reduction in the quality or quantum of additional facilities or services required.

The Lead Member for Adult Services highlighted that the £1m saving identified in his area was relatively small given the entire budget for the service. A number of windfalls had occurred. He highlighted two elements:

- Increased client contributions being received from older people £382,000
- A provision was made for a high cost ordinary residence case which was only partially required following settlement, releasing £213,000

The Chairman commented that his father-in-law had recently died and the house had been sold as his mother-in-law was in a nursing home in the borough. He had felt that



the council officers who had dealt with the care funding situation for his mother-in-law had not sufficiently understood the implications for funding, despite it being a common situation. The Managing Director commented that the situation was increasingly common and had led to an increase in client contributions. There had been a number of learning points for the borough including the need to probe and question on the eligibility to claim.

The Chairman highlighted the excellent work undertaken on CCTV and civil enforcement, which had led to some in-year pressures as the predicted savings were therefore not going to materialise. It was the right thing to have done to pause on the saving to enable the review to take place and he congratulated the Lead Member.

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Cabinet:**

- i) Notes the Council's projected outturn position for 2017-18 and mitigating actions to address service pressures.**
- ii) Adds Achieving for Children (AfC) to the Council's lending list with a maximum limit of £11,700,000 for a revolving credit facility in accordance with the contract with AfC as detailed in paragraph 4.31.**
- iii) Approves the changes to the Children's capital programme as detailed in paragraph 4.36.**

LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972 - EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That under Section 100(A)(4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the remainder of the meeting whilst discussion took place on item 8 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Paragraphs 1-7 of part I of Schedule 12A of the Act.**

The meeting, which began at 6.30 pm, finished at 8.05 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....