

## CABINET

THURSDAY, 28 APRIL 2016

PRESENT: Councillors David Burbage (Chairman), Simon Dudley, David Coppinger, Carwyn Cox, Geoff Hill, Derek Wilson, Natasha Airey, Colin Rayner and Christine Bateson

Principal Members also in attendance: George Bathurst, Paul Brimacombe and Phillip Love.

Also in attendance: Councillor Malcolm Beer and Councillor Lynne Jones

Officers: Richard Bunn, Alison Alexander, Louisa Dean, Jessica Hosmer-Wright, Simon Fletcher, Russell O'Keefe, David Scott, Karen Shepherd and Anna Trott

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Bicknell and Stretton.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Bathurst declared an interest in the item 'Economic Development Strategy' due to his involvement in the Windsor Link Railway. He remained in the room for the duration of the discussion and voting on the item.

Councillor Bateson declared an interest in the item 'New Primary School Places in Ascot' as she was a committee member of Sunninghill Parochial Charities which may lease land to a school. She remained in the room for the duration of the discussion and voting on the item.

Councillor Rayner declared an interest in the item 'Economic Development Strategy' as land he owned may be affected by the Smart Motorway project. He left the room for the duration of the discussion and voting on the item.

Councillor Hill declared an interest in the item 'Town Centre Wi-Fi as he owned property in Maidenhead in the coverage area. He remained in the room for the duration of the discussion and voting on the item.

### MINUTES

#### **RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY:**

- i) That the Part I minutes of the meeting held on 31 March 2016 were approved.**
- ii) That the Part I minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet Local Authority Governors Appointments Sub Committee held on 31 March 2016 be noted**

## APPOINTMENTS

None

## 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 following items would be considered by the Cabinet Regeneration Sub Committee on 19 May 2016:

- St Clouds Opportunity Area – Leisure Centre Strategy
- St Clouds Opportunity Area – Asset Strategy Update
- York Road and West Street Procurement Strategy

## CABINET MEMBERS' REPORTS

### A) TOWN CENTRE WIFI

Cabinet considered an update on the introduction of town centre wi-fi and an offer from InTechnology Wi-Fi which would deliver free public wi-fi in Windsor and Maidenhead town centres. The Lead Member explained that the idea had originally been suggested by Councillor Sharp. The proposal was initially for large parts of Maidenhead and Windsor Town Centres. Eton and Ascot would be looked at subsequently.

Members noted that the proposal was a zero-cost deal to the borough. In addition the council would receive an annual income of £6450 and a 25% profit share in revenue generated from advertising on the app. The Visit Windsor app would be replaced. The implementation plan at page 49 illustrated that the go-live date was December 2016.

The Lead Member for Finance suggested that York Road and the Maidenhead Football Club should be included in the coverage area. The Principal Member for Policy suggested that both the town partnerships should be consulted on details. Councillor Beer suggested York House in Windsor should be included and raised concern over cookies and the use of data. The Lead Member responded that the exact coverage areas were flexible and he would discuss with InTechnology Wi-Fi. He confirmed that the council logo and branding would appear on the app; he would discuss with the provider to ensure prominence. It was noted that free wi-fi was already available to visitors at York House. The Strategic Director confirmed that the usual opt-out clauses would be included in the contract. He would look into the issue of cookies and respond to Councillor Beer. The income prediction was at this stage conservative and it was anticipated that improved technology would increase usage over time.

It was noted that the report had been considered by the Corporate Services Overview & Scrutiny Panel.

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

- i) **Award a concession contract to 'InTechnology WiFi' for a period of 10 years to develop and deliver town centre wi-fi in Windsor and Maidenhead**

- ii) **Notes the suppliers projection that the contract award will realise an annual concession fee of £6,450, plus a 25% share of all revenue generated from the contract**

B) HOUSING INVESTMENT PARTNERSHIP PLAN

Members considered changes that were emerging in the Housing and Planning Bill and a plan to maximise delivery of the manifesto commitments in the borough. The Lead Member explained that a Housing Supplementary Planning Document (SPD), which would form part of the Borough Local Plan, would be developed by December 2016. Members noted the range of housing types proposed in paragraphs 2.5-2.13 of the report. The Lead Member explained that the proposals would help and encourage young people to get on the housing market ladder.

Members noted that the Starter Homes initiative had come from central government and included the potential to purchase agricultural land at market rate to be used as rural exception sites. In relation to Key Worker housing the Lead Member referred to an email he had recently received from a nurse who was keen to take advantage of the scheme.

The Lead Member for Adult Services and Housing commented that this was one of the most important reports to come before Cabinet as it provided a range of housing solutions for everyone in the borough. The Lead Member for Finance echoed these comments. The council had its own significant land holdings and when the time came to realise these assets the council would take into account the need to build a town for everyone.

The Lead Member confirmed that capping limits would apply to land purchased at agricultural rates.

Councillor Jones expressed concern that there would still be families that could not afford rents described as affordable in the report who would have no option other than to move away or live in units too small for their family size. She asked for reassurance that this issue would be considered. Councillor Beer echoed these concerns and commented that only teachers were referred to in the report in relation to Key Worker housing; he felt the scheme should be open to a wider range of workers. The Lead Member for Finance responded that when the council came to realise its land assets it would take a conscious decision that it may receive less than the maximum possible. Promotion for those living and working in the borough would be considered. The Chairman commented that the development of the SPD would give councillors the opportunity to feed in detailed comments on the proposals. The council would meet with developers to discuss how to build a borough for everyone, despite the difficult market realities of the area.

Councillor Beer highlighted that the Local Plans Working Group had recommended that rural exception sites should be permanently reserved for rental.

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Cabinet:**

- i) **Approves that following submission of the Borough Local Plan, that a Supplementary Planning Document should be progressed on the delivery of housing, including affordable, shared ownership and other tenures and types.**

**ii) Approves the detailed actions set out in paragraphs 2.24 – 2.28.**

**C) NEW PRIMARY SCHOOL PLACES IN ASCOT**

Members considered options for the provision of additional primary school places in Ascot.

The Lead Member for Finance introduced the report. He explained that there was a shortage of primary places across the borough but that the situation was more acute in the south. The proposal was to consult on a number of options including expansion of existing schools and the possibility of a primary free school or “all through” free school.

The Chief Whip commented that there had been a moratorium in the area for the last six years due to the SPA but a rush of development was now expected. This had been referred to in the Neighbourhood Plan at a rate of 60 dwellings per year, which could require more than one new school. The Lead Member for Environmental Services commented that such demand was a good problem to have as it was an endorsement that people wanted to live and raise their family in the borough. The Lead Member for Finance explained that the secondary school expansion programme had already used the Basic Needs Grant and a further £6m was needed. Any additional spaces in Ascot would require more funding, however this would be reduced if a free school came forward as the cost would be borne at the national level.

Councillor Jones urged Members to carefully consider the location of any new school.

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Cabinet:**

- i. Approves public consultation, commencing June 2016, on options for providing additional primary school places in Ascot in the suggested priority order as follows:**
  - **Expand Cheapside CE Primary School from 16 to 30 places per year group.**
  - **Expand South Ascot Village School from 30 to 60 places per year group.**
  - **Expand Holy Trinity CE Primary School from 30 to 60 places per year group.**
  - **Opening of a free school on a new, unidentified site.**
- ii. Requests a report on the outcome of the consultation on the expansion of primary school places in Ascot to August 2016 Cabinet.**
- iii. Approves further feasibility and design works proceeding alongside the consultation to allow implementation of any approved scheme(s).**

**D) ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY 2016-19**

Members considered an Economic Delivery Strategy, outlining the key economic development objectives for the borough over the next 3 years.

The Principal Member demonstrated the new website to colleagues ([www.investwindsorandmaidenhead.co.uk](http://www.investwindsorandmaidenhead.co.uk)) highlighting the new logo of ‘Invest

RBWM'. The main page contained general information about the borough and was available in English, Mandarin, Arabic and Japanese. A quirky, interesting fact was listed on each page to attract interest in reading further. The website would be live the following week.

The Principal Member highlighted the following interesting statistics from the Strategy:

- The Royal Borough's average annual income of £39,000 was significantly above the national average of £27,000
- Unemployment was low, but the borough had a higher than regional average number of low paid jobs, probably because Windsor was a key tourism destination in the UK with numerous eateries and bars where jobs were often not well paid. However, with the Castle, Ascot and Windsor racecourses and Legoland in 2014 it was estimated that expenditure from tourism visitors amounted to £459m.
- 29 of the South East's top 500 companies now had their main offices in the Royal Borough: 18 in Maidenhead, 10 in Windsor and one in Ascot. One of the key sectors was digital media technology.
- In 2015, it was identified that there were 585 computer consultancy companies, 111 advertising companies and 40 motion picture production companies in the borough.
- The small to medium business sector was thriving with over 8,800 companies.
- House prices were the highest outside Greater London; perhaps not surprising when 9% of households had an annual income exceeding £100,000 compared to just 4% nationally.

The Economic Development Strategy was a three year strategy aimed at strengthening the council's relationships with business and helping residents achieve economic wellbeing through greater employment and training opportunities. SWOT analysis had indicated that a key weakness of the borough was the fact that Windsor and Maidenhead were not being actively promoted as a place for inward investment, and relied on partners like Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce and UK Trade and Investment. The Borough did not have a relationship with key businesses and there was currently no mechanism for consulting key businesses outside of the town centre partnerships. The analysis also identified that the ageing population of the borough could make it less economically competitive in relation to neighbouring authorities like Slough.

A year 1 Action Plan 2016-2017 had been devised to facilitate the delivery of the strategy driven by the following three key aims and objectives:

- Improve Business engagement – The council would develop a business network with key local employers with a view to understanding the different needs of each business and retaining existing business in the borough. The use of business advisers to existing businesses would be promoted to help them grow and promote pop up offices and retail in the town centres.
- Increase Inward Investment – The new website would help to promote the borough to existing business and potential new business investors, including the benefits of Crossrail to the borough and the M4 and M3 smart motorway schemes. Businesses looking to move into the borough would be supported as would the sustainable growth of the visitor economy in the borough. Investment in a Wi-Fi service for Windsor and Maidenhead town centres had already been discussed. The Berkshire Superfast Broadband programme was being

supported across the borough. Another obvious objective was to increase footfall in Windsor and Maidenhead town centres.

- Equip residents with the skills of today and for the future - The council must work with businesses, further education and training providers to identify future skills requirements, and how these skills could be acquired through education and training. The work of the LEP, Elevate and Grow Our Own would be supported and the use of S106 for Employment & Training to support up-skilling of those residents who wanted to move jobs but lacked the skills to access new opportunities would be encouraged.

The Principal Member for Policy urged that the two town partnerships be involved as there were lots of resources available. The Principal Member agreed this would be a good idea.

Councillor Jones highlighted that at paragraph 5.4.3 the issue was lack of *affordable* parking for those working in low paid jobs in the town centres.

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Cabinet approve the Economic Development Strategy; the year 1 action plan to facilitate its delivery and the investwindsorandmaidenhead.co.uk website launch.**

**(Councillor Rayner left the meeting for the duration of the discussion and voting on the item)**

#### E) STAFFERTON WAY LINK ROAD - FINANCE UPDATE

Members considered a financial update on the Stafferton Way Link Road project. The Lead Member highlighted the fantastic benefit of the new link road to residents; unfortunately the cost had increased by £1.25m. Members noted the four areas of overspend as detailed in the appendix. He highlighted that the cost of a right hand turn had been agreed by members at £50,000. If Members had been aware of the additional (unauthorised) expenditure of £125,000 on this aspect, it was unlikely it would have been approved.

Members noted how the additional costs would be covered:

- £445,000 from underspends in the Operations and Customer Services capital programme for 2015/16. The Lead Member confirmed that this would not result in the reduction in scope or cancellation of any other capital projects.
- £125,000 from an underspend on the LED lighting project
- £680,000 would be added to the capital programme for 2015/16.

A number of lessons had been learnt including timely reporting of financial information, understanding trade offs, and full involvement of Members, officers and consultants in the decision making process.

The Principal Member for Transformation and Performance commented that there had been a failure of process but he was pleased that quality standards had been met. He would be bringing forward a report in July 2016 which would put in place a comprehensive, scalable and mandated project management methodology for the borough.

Councillor Jones welcomed the review of processes. She asked for assurance that the allocation of £680,000 would not affect anything else. The Lead Member responded that the LED lighting project may end up costing less than anticipated and therefore may deal with the overspend in totality. If it did not, it would bring forward the likelihood that the council would increase borrowings. However the council had significant assets which would be realised over time and in due course he hoped borrowing would then reduce.

Councillor Beer asked whether the investigation had yet concluded and if a surcharge was applicable. He also questioned the inclusion of a weight limit which could reduce the effectiveness of the scheme. The Strategic Director confirmed that the investigation was likely to conclude in the following two weeks. The Chairman highlighted that he had already offered to go through the investigation with Opposition Members. The Lead Member for Customer and Business Services commented that residents of Oldfield Road had been concerned about large vehicles, therefore the weight limit kept them on the A4 other than for delivery and access.

It was noted that the figure in Table 5 'Deduct approved budget increase' should read £132,000 rather than £192,000.

The Principal Member for Transformation and Policy agreed to send Councillor Beer a copy of the draft project management methodology.

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Cabinet:**

- i. Approves allocation of the underspend in the Operations and Customer Services Capital programme 2015/16 amounting to £445k to the Stafferton Way Link Road project**
- ii. Notes the request to Council on 26 April 2016 to increase the approved Operations and Customer Services capital programme 2015/16 by £680k**
- iii. Reallocates savings of £125k from the approved budget for the LED Street Lighting capital project to Stafferton Way Link Road**

**F) FINANCIAL UPDATE**

Cabinet considered the latest financial update. The Lead Member reported a projected underspend of £483,000, whilst noting the addition of £2.2m to the Adult Social Care budget earlier in the year. Reserves were healthy, with the Development Fund currently at £663,000. At the start of the 2016/17 financial year £1.3m of transitional grant funding from central government would be transferred to the Development Fund.

Members noted that Two5Nine Ltd would be renamed RBWM Property Ltd. The report proposed an increase in the lending limit by £200,000 to £1.5m to enable the refurbishment of a property in Windsor to be used for affordable rental.

The Interim Head of Finance confirmed that the business debt write off had been fully investigated and all opportunity for recovery had gone. Directors could be traced but as a limited company they would have limited liability. The Lead Member for Finance commented that he hoped the individuals would be struck off the list so they could not be directors of any company in the future.

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Cabinet:**

- i) **Notes the report and the projected outturn position.**
- ii) **Approves an increase to the lending limit for Two 5 Nine Ltd. from £1.3m to £1.5m (See Paragraph 4.8).**
- iii) **Approves the write off of a £61,132 business rate debt. (See paragraph 4.9)**

MONITORING REPORTS

A) TRANSFORMATION - BASELINE FIGURES

Members received a monitoring report detailing baseline figures for both qualitative and quantitative benefits relating to the council's Transformation programme. The Principal Member commended all involved for the stretch targets.

Councillor Jones commented that she was wary of including a 10% council tax reduction, which was dependent on achieving the first two benefits. The Principal Member commented that this was a key administration target and with actions already underway and adjusted for inflation, the council was on target to achieve this benefit.

Councillor Beer commented that including compliments in a target related to reducing complaints was confusing. The Principal Member agreed this needed to be split out.

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 takes place on items 9-10 on the grounds that they involve 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 7.30 pm, finished at 9.26 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....