

CABINET

THURSDAY, 30 MAY 2019

PRESENT: Councillors Andrew Johnson, Simon Dudley (Chairman), David Coppinger (Vice-Chairman), Samantha Rayner, Stuart Carroll, David Hilton, Gerry Clark and Shamsul Shelim

Also in attendance: Cllr Bateson, Cllr Sharpe, Cllr Price, Cllr Jones, Cllr Hill, Cllr Knowles and Cllr Brar.

Officers: Russell O'Keefe, Kevin McDaniel, Louisa Dean, Rob Stubbs, Andy Jeffs, Hilary Hall, Nikki Craig and David Cook.

APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Cannon. Cllr Carroll reported that he would be late.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest received.

MINUTES

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the Part I minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2019 were approved.

APPOINTMENTS

Councillor Carroll and Councillor Stimson appointed to the AfC Joint Committee.

Cllr Hunt recommended to the Optalis board as the RBWM representative.

Cllr Rayner to be the RBWM Military Champion. The Chairman welcomed Cllr Knowles, who was in attendance, and acknowledged his long serving military career.

Cllr Larcombe to be appointed to the Flood Liaison Group and the Thames Region Flood and Coastal Committee.

FORWARD PLAN

Cabinet considered the contents of the Forward Plan for the next four months and noted the changes made since the last meeting including the addition of the following reports to June 2019 Cabinet:

- Financial Update
- Joint Central and Eastern Berkshire Waste and Mineral Plan – Regulation 18, consultation on additional site allocation (Bray Quarry Extension)
- Berkshire Local Industrial Strategy – Consultation Response

CABINET MEMBERS' REPORTS

A) PROPOSED REVISIONS TO THE HIGHWAYS MAINTENANCE MANAGEMENT PLAN - 24 HOUR POTHOLE RESPONSE

The Lead Member for Infrastructure, Transport Policy and Housing introduced the report that asked for a revision to the Highways Maintenance Management Plan to enable every carriageway pothole to be repaired within 24 hours.

The Lead Member informed that he was delighted to be presenting the report that fulfilled one of the administration's pledges of investing more than £50 million in RBWM highways and pavements over the next four years, fixing every reported pothole within 24 hours and introducing an inspection regime for every road every year. This was a 'Best in Berkshire Pot Hole Pledge'.

Cabinet were informed that this was an extension of the existing policy and that when a road was inspected if it was deemed that the condition of the road was such that resurfacing was more appropriate than fixing a pothole then this would take priority.

The proposals were being put to Cabinet as this was a key priority for residents and improvements would further enhance the boroughs infrastructure, benefiting cyclists and other road users.

Cllr Hill informed Cabinet that he felt that the recommendation should be amended as it a pothole was not being repaired within 24 hours due to the condition of the road than this was not fulfilling the pledge.

Cllr Hill supported improvement to the road infrastructure but noted that insurance claims were down and that the number of potholes currently not fixed within 24 hours was about 500 per year. He felt that adding an additional £450,000, equating to about £900 per pothole repair, was a lot of money when the council was overspent.

The Chairman informed that it was anticipated that there would be more reported potholes and following this increase we should reach a base level of repairs required due to adverse weather conditions. The main priority was to implement residents wishes and if further funding was required then a further report would be brought before members.

The Lead Member for Culture, Communities and Windsor informed that this was an excellent paper delivering what our residents wanted. She highlighted the new 'report it' section on the RBWM website that made reporting potholes and other issues easier.

Resolved unanimously: That Cabinet notes the report and:

i) Approves a revision to the Highways Maintenance Management Plan to enable every carriageway pothole over 40mm, or footway defect over 25mm to be repaired within 24 working hours regardless of the category of road, at an additional annual cost of £450,000.

(Cllr Carroll joined the meeting)

B) MEMBERS' ALLOWANCES - LATE CLAIMS BY FORMER COUNCILLOR BEER AND COUNCILLOR LUXTON

The Chairman introduced the report requesting authorisation to pay late Member expense claims, over the qualifying period, for Cllr Luxton and former Cllr Beer.

Resolved Unanimously: that Cabinet notes the report and:

i) Agrees to pay the outstanding claims for former Cllr Beer and Cllr Luxton on this occasion only.

C) FINANCIAL UPDATE

The Lead Member for Finance and Ascot introduced the latest financial update report.

Cabinet were informed that there had been little movement from the April 2019 financial update report. There was the addition of the Heathrow judicial review that was expected to be no greater than £100,000. Table 3 showed capital expenditure and appendix C the projected cash flow. The Lead Member also reported that the school expansion schemes at Charters, Cox Green and Windsor Boys had all come under budget.

Cllr Jones reported that the outturn position did not show the actual outturn position but just the variance position and this equated to a £8.9 million overspend then budgeted for. She was concerned about the level of reserves, cash flow requiring interest added and time scales for capital not being added.

Cllr Jones mentioned that £4 million of savings for the year was required but there was already a £350, 000 overspend and the earlier report had allocated a further £450,000 to the highways budget. Cllr Jones was concerned that reserves could be lowered to £6.6 million.

The Chairman reported that reserves were £7.922,000 with a further transfer of £3.450,000 expected resulting in a balanced budget with £11.500,000 of reserves that was 200% higher than the minimal level set by Council. It was confirmed that this would put reserves at an historical high level for the borough.

Cllr Hill raised concern about the cash flow forecast resulting in a debt of £180,000,000 at the end of the financial year, he raised concern that the projected capital receipts would not cover the debt and that the administration were selling the councils assets.

The Chairman disagreed with the projection provided by Cllr Hill and said that the administration had detailed cash flow projections with all debt paid off as well as investment in infrastructure. Capital receipts from regeneration would come in over time.

The Lead Member informed that the capital programme did not account for future capital receipts.

Resolved unanimously: That Cabinet:

i) Notes the council's projected outturn position for 2018-19.

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 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.

Part II Minutes

Resolved Unanimously: that the Part II minutes of the meeting held on 25 April 2019 were approved.

The meeting, which began at 7.30 pm, finished at 7.55 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....