

CABINET

THURSDAY 30 MARCH 2023

PRESENT: Councillors Andrew Johnson (Leader of the Council; Growth & Opportunity) (Chairman), David Coppinger (Adult Social Care & Maidenhead), Samantha Rayner (Deputy Leader of the Council; Business, Corporate & Residents Services, Culture & Heritage, & Windsor), Phil Haseler (Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport) and David Hilton (Asset Management & Commercialisation, Finance, & Ascot)

Present Virtually: Councillors Stuart Carroll (Deputy Chairman of Cabinet; Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation) (Vice-Chairman), Donna Stimson (Climate Action & Sustainability), Ross McWilliams (Digital Connectivity, Housing Opportunity, & Sport & Leisure) and Gurpreet Bhangra (Environmental Services, Parks and Countryside)

Also in attendance: Councillor Gerry Clark

Also in attendance virtually: Councillors Mandy Brar & Amy Tisi

Officers: Oran Norris-Browne, Tony Reeves, Andrew Durrant, Kevin McDaniel, Andrew Vallance, Nikki Craig and Louise Freeth

Officers in attendance virtually: Elaine Browne, Lin Ferguson, Rebecca Hatch and Adrien Waite

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Cannon.

Councillors Bhangra, Carroll, McWilliams & Stimson were attending virtually as non-voting members.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

Minutes

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on 23 February were approved.

Appointments

None

Forward Plan

Cabinet noted the Forward Plan for the next four months including the following additional changes:

- The 2023/24 School Condition Works Programme, the Building Height and Tall Buildings SPD and the John West House Redevelopment items were all scheduled for the March

Cabinet meeting but had been delayed to the April meeting for the reasons listed on page 23 of the agenda.

- The Disabled Facilities Grant Policy, the DFG new build and the Allocations Policy items were all scheduled for the March Cabinet meeting but would now be heard at the May meeting for the reasons listed on page 23 of the agenda.
- The Home to School Transport Policy item was scheduled to appear at the April Cabinet meeting, but it was now no longer coming to Cabinet as there were no planned changes to the policy for the next academic year for Cabinet to consider.

Lower Mount Farm (Cannondown Road) Stakeholder Masterplan Document

Cabinet considered the report titled the Lower Mount Farm (Cannondown Road) Stakeholder Masterplan Document.

Councillor Haseler, Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport, introduced the report that outlined the Borough Local Plan requirement for the preparation of Stakeholder Masterplan Documents, and he summarised the process and outcome in relation to the Stakeholder Masterplan Document for the land west of Cannondown Road in Cookham.

A working group had been created by the developer, Bellway Homes and the planning agent, Turley, which comprised of members of the local community, elected councillors, council officers and interest groups as well as an urban design advisor working on behalf of the council. Details of this and the public consultation, could be found in greater detail within the report. The main changes to the SMD as a result of the public consultation feedback included:

- Greater clarity given on biodiversity net gain.
- The removal of the six villages on site, replacing them with four-character areas.
- Removal of cul-de-sacs.

Councillor Coppinger, Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care & Maidenhead wished to second the report and said that the requirement for SMD's to be created within the Borough Local Plan had proved to be one of the most important items included within the plan. He said that the benefit to residents here was substantial and reminded Cabinet that it was not a planning application, but instead a view on what should be included within the application at a later stage.

Councillor Johnson, Chair & Leader of the Council, then invited the first public speaker to address Cabinet.

Jon Herbert addressed Cabinet as a chartered planner who had been asked to speak on behalf of Cookham Parish Council as a registered public speaker. He was given three minutes to address Cabinet virtually.

The Chair thanked Mr Herbert for his comments and invited the second public speaker to address Cabinet.

Paul Strzelecki addressed Cabinet in-person as a registered public speaker. He was also given three minutes to do so.

The Chair thanked Mr Strzelecki for his comments and then invite the two Ward Councillors for Bisham & Cookham to address Cabinet as non-cabinet members.

Councillor Clark said that residents did not feel as though the public consultation was wide enough and stated that this was evident with only 60 persons having subscribed on the website. He did however say that he was attending with an open mind and endorsed some of

the points raised within the report, such as infrastructure being covered by Section 106 agreements. He did not however that issues such as school places and increased traffic had not been covered by this and were not addressed in a meeting with the developer either. He had also asked the developer if these homes could indeed be prioritised for Cookham families first. He ended his submission by stating that many questions remained unanswered on the finer details.

Councillor Brar asked Cabinet to reject this SMD as there had been no displays or notification of the public consultation at all. She said that the impact on local schools would be very negative and that Holy Trinity School for example could only be accessed via vehicle. Therefore, the increases in traffic would be quite severe. She then said that an article in a recent newspaper stated that the Leader of the Council had said that not as many homes were required in the borough, as had been requested by the Government. She asked if this was one of the sites that would be removed from the Borough Local Plan if this was the case.

The Chair replied by saying that his comments were not to try and remove sites from the Borough Local Plan, but instead was more around what good placemaking looked like and a focus more on this.

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport thanked all four speakers for their contributions. He confirmed that the Cookham Parish Council had been involved in the process throughout and that it was their responsibility to notify residents as outlined by Councillor Brar. He said that health targets were being met as outlined within the report and officers were constantly reviewing school places across the borough.

The Chair said that the 40% affordable housing target for the site was an absolute red line and that more affordable housing within the borough was a must. His view along with that of Councillor Clark's was also that families in Cookham on the waiting list for housing, should be prioritised above all else.

Councillor Stimson, Cabinet Member for Climate Action & Sustainability said that she found it absolutely critical that the SMD ran alongside the sustainability SPD and that in future if any SMD did not meet the sustainability requirements within the SPD, then they would not move forward.

Councillor Haseler proposed officer's recommendations, and this was seconded by Councillor Coppinger.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Cabinet noted the report and approved the Land west of Cannondown Road Stakeholder Masterplan Document as an important material consideration for Development Management purposes.

2022/23 Month 10 Budget Monitoring Report

Cabinet considered the report titled 2022/23 Month 10 Budget Monitoring.

Councillor Hilton, Cabinet Member for Asset Management & Commercialisation, Finance, & Ascot, introduced the report, which outlined an overspend of £795,000 on services, which was a favourable movement of £139,000 from Month 8. Unused contingency reduced this to an underspend of nearly £1.5 million. He then outlined some of the reasons as to why these figures may have been the case. Children's Services reported an unchanged overspend of £255,000, which was deemed a reasonable outcome following an increase in refugee numbers. The Place directorate had reported an overspend of around £734,000, which was pleasing due to the increase in the cost of leisure services, caused mainly by an increase in utility bills.

The Chair stated that the borough was on target for the fourth year of general underspend and sound financial management. He was very happy to second the proposal.

Councillor Hilton proposed officer's recommendations, and this was seconded by Councillor Johnson.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Cabinet:

- i) **noted the forecast revenue outturn for the year was an overspend on services of £0.795m which reduced to an underspend of £1.494m when considering unallocated contingency budgets and changes to funding budgets**
- ii) **noted the forecast capital outturn was expenditure of £63.848m against a budget of £76.344m**

Standards and Quality of Education in Royal Borough schools

Cabinet considered the report titled Standards and Quality of Education – A Review of the Academic Year 2021-22.

The Chair proposed officer's recommendations on behalf of Councillor Carroll, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation, due to him attending the meeting virtually.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation introduced the report to Cabinet and outlined what the report set out. The time period that the report covered of course saw a number of different crisis including the pandemic, the aftermath of this and also the current cost-of-living crisis, all of which had made things very challenging for schools. Efforts were being continued to deliver the best services for schools and children within the borough, even with certain challenges that had come into play.

Kevin McDaniel, Executive Director of People Services, said that the borough had a number of outstanding schools. He commented on the sad case of a Reading headteacher who sadly took her own life following an Ofsted inspection and said that his team had reached out to headteachers of the borough offering their support. He wished to place on record his thanks to headteachers who had rallied around each other recently.

He added that in September 2022, the Department for Education (DfE) invited the borough to continue the teacher training programme, which only a limited number of the local authorities had been asked to do, on the back of some outstanding performances. SEND was also noted as being under increased demand and that the team had already been complemented by the DfE for their quality of engagement around the delivering better value programme.

Councillor Rayner, Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Business, Corporate & Residents Services, Culture & Heritage, & Windsor, seconded this report and thanked all headteachers within the borough for their fantastic work and also congratulated Lin Ferguson on her change in role to Director of Children's Services, which would commence on 3 April 2023.

Councillor Tisi was invited to speak as a non-cabinet member. She echoed the praise that had been given to all those involved in education. She asked if Cabinet were confident that the borough would be able to meet the new statutory duty to provide the education welfare services for every school. Kevin McDaniel said that the report did state that this would be achievable and that he was confident that the borough could deliver this.

Councillor Johnson proposed officer's recommendations, and this was seconded by Councillor Rayner.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Cabinet noted the report and:

- i) **Congratulated local schools on their continued success.**
- ii) **Endorsed the key priorities set out in section 2.87 of the report.**

Sawyers Close Stakeholder Masterplan Document

Cabinet considered the report titled Sawyers Close Stakeholder Masterplan Document.

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport, introduced the report and said that it was not a Borough Local Plan allocated site. The site comprised of four 8-storey towers located 2 km west of Windsor town centre. 192 flats were currently there. 421 new homes in total would be provided. He said that a number of Corporate Plan goals would be achieved with this SMD. Community consultation comprising of various different events took place in the summer of 2021, where feedback was encouraged on the proposals. He then set out some of the main principles of the SMD.

The Chair said that he was happy to second the report and re-iterated his earlier remarks made during the debate on item 6, with regards to affordable housing.

Greg Evans was then invited to address Cabinet in-person as the agent from Savills, on behalf of the developer, Abri. He was given three minutes to speak.

Councillor Haseler proposed officer's recommendations, and this was seconded by Councillor Johnson.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Cabinet noted the report and approved the Sawyers Close Stakeholder Masterplan Document as an important material consideration for Development Management purposes.

New Shared Service Agreement for the commissioning of Joint Legal Services (JLT)

Cabinet considered the report titled New Shared Service Agreement for the commissioning of Joint Legal Services (JLT).

The Chair proposed officer's recommendations on behalf of Councillor Carroll, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation, due to him attending the meeting virtually. Councillor Rayner seconded this.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation briefly outlined the report to Cabinet and stated clearly what the recommendation was that Cabinet were being asked to agree.

Councillor Johnson proposed officer's recommendations, and this was seconded by Councillor Rayner.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Cabinet noted the report and:

- i) **Agreed that the attached Heads of Terms, formed the basis of a new Shared Service Agreement between all the Berkshire local authorities.**
- ii) **Delegated authority to the Executive Director of People Services in consultation with relevant Cabinet Member, to negotiate the final version of the Shared Service Agreement, to agree and complete the same.**

Borough Wide Heritage Strategy and Action Plan Update

Cabinet considered the report titled Borough Wide Heritage Strategy and Action Plan Update.

The Cabinet Member for Planning, Parking, Highways & Transport stated that in April 2019, Cabinet had agreed that the Council would provide an innovative heritage strategy that was provided by the local community. The pandemic unfortunately meant that the consultant was unable to progress this. During the time of the pandemic, national and council policies were changed, with plans such as the Corporate Plan and the Borough Local Plan also being seen to be implemented. Work was paused. Councillor Rayner wished to second the paper as the Cabinet Member for Heritage. She stated that the borough was known worldwide for some of its heritage such as Windsor Castle and that it was important to showcase this.

Councillor Haseler proposed officer's recommendations, and this was seconded by Councillor Rayner.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Cabinet noted the updated information and:

- i) Approved the revised brief for a Borough Wide Heritage Strategy and Action Plan**
- ii) Agreed the re-commencement of the project in accordance with the updated brief and timetable**

Household Support Fund, Tranche 4 allocation

Cabinet considered the report titled Household Support Fund, 2023/24 Allocation.

Councillor Hilton, Cabinet Member for Asset Management & Commercialisation, Finance, & Ascot, introduced the report with the permission of the Chair by briefly outlining the contents of the report to Cabinet. The Chair seconded this proposal and wished to crack on and support and distribute money to vulnerable households.

Kevin McDaniel wished to just clarify to Cabinet on what the recommendation was that was to be agreed by them. The decision as to recommend continuing both programmes as outlined within the report. Children who were eligible for free school meals were to be given continued access to food vouchers, to ensure that particularly during the colder months, that no child in the borough went hungry.

Councillor Hilton proposed officer's recommendations, and this was seconded by Councillor Johnson.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Cabinet noted the report and:

- i) Agreed the recommended approach for the allocation of Tranche 4 of the Household Support Fund and for payments to households to commence from 1 April 2023, which was the start of the tranche 4 funding period. It was recommended that the Household Support Fund was allocated through two separate schemes, extending the approach agreed for tranche 3 as set out in detail on page 401 of the report.**
- ii) Delegated authority to the relevant Executive Director, in consultation with the Section 151 officer and relevant Cabinet Member, to submit a detailed Delivery Plan to DWP, by 17 May 2023.**

Special Educational Needs and Disabilities (SEND) and Alternative Provision (AP) Capital Strategy

Cabinet considered the report titled Special Educational Needs (SEND) and Alternative Provision Capital Strategy.

The Chair proposed officer's recommendations on behalf of Councillor Carroll, Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation, due to him attending the meeting virtually.

The Cabinet Member for Children's Services, Education, Health, Mental Health, & Transformation stated that the report was an extremely important one and followed on from the debates that had already been had on the two reports that had come before Cabinet earlier in the meeting. He said that the proposals included up to four new resource bases that were attached to main stream schools and a new early years School Readiness Hub. He stated that the DfE had approved the borough's application to establish a new special free school within the borough. The recommendations within the report were very important in achieving the borough's corporate objective around thriving communities. He asked that Cabinet supported the important paper and to agree with officer's recommendations.

Kevin McDaniel added two points. The first was that a number of governors had expressed support towards these proposals. The leadership teams at both Cox Green and Desborough were also very supportive of this, even though they had not yet had chance to consult the governors. The second was that the finances that related to this report were separate as they came from the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG).

The Cabinet Member for Asset Management & Commercialisation, Finance, & Ascot said that it was vital that children who required SEND education had access to it in the school in which they were based.

Councillor Johnson proposed officer's recommendations, and this was seconded by Councillor Rayner.

RSEOVLED UNANIMOUSLY: That Cabinet noted the report and:

- i) Approved, in principle, the proposals for new Special Educational Needs & Disabilities (SEND) provision as set out in Table 5.**
- ii) Recommended the budgets for delivery of these proposals, as set out in Appendix G to Council for inclusion in the 2023/24 capital programme.**
- iii) Requested formal consultation on the proposal for Hilltop First School and (if required) consultation on amended proposals for Cox Green School and Desborough College, and delegated authority to the AfC Director of Children's Services, in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member to then make the final decision(s) on whether to proceed.**
- iv) Requested the submission of Business Cases to the Department of Education, seeking the necessary approvals of the proposals in Table 5 that involved academies.**
- v) Delegated authority to the AfC Director of Children's Services and the Procurement Manager to undertake procurement and enter into contracts for the delivery of the new SEND provision set out in Table 5, subject to the points outlined on page 436 in 1. v) of the report.**

Customer Relationship Management procurement

Cabinet considered the report titled Customer Relationship Management procurement.

Councillor Rayner, Deputy Leader of the Council & Cabinet Member for Business, Corporate & Residents Services, Culture & Heritage, & Windsor introduced the report and firstly pointed out that she was wishing to change the proposal that was outlined to say “relevant Cabinet Member” rather than the individual Cabinet Member brief that was listed. She then followed this by outlining the report and said that colleagues were working with the procurement team before the end of contract came into play in February 2024. A budget allocation of £500,000 had already been approved in the 2023/24 budget by Full Council in February 2023 and she asked Cabinet to agree the officer’s recommendations that were listed within the report, subject to the above minor adjustment.

Councillor Rayner proposed officer’s recommendations, and this was seconded by Councillor Johnson.

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That Cabinet noted the report and delegated authority to the Chief Executive or relevant Executive Director in consultation with the relevant Cabinet Member to award the new Customer Relationship Management system to the successful tenderer following the conclusion of the procurement process.

The Chair then wished to take the opportunity before moving into part II to publicly thank Tony Reeve, Interim Chief Executive, for all of his hard work and support over the last seven months and wished him well for the future.

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 the items 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 7.00 pm, finished at 8.34 pm

CHAIR.....

DATE.....