

CABINET

WEDNESDAY 27 MARCH 2024

Present: Councillors Simon Werner (Chair), Lynne Jones (Vice-Chair), Richard Coe, Geoff Hill, Joshua Reynolds, Catherine Del Campo, Adam Bermange and Karen Davies

Also in attendance: Councillors Helen Price and Mark Wilson

Also in attendance virtually: Councillor Maureen Hunt

Officers: Oran Norris-Browne, Stephen Evans, Lin Ferguson, Elizabeth Griffiths, Andrew Durrant, Elaine Browne, Kevin McDaniel, Alysse Strachan, Lucy Kourpas and Christopher Wheeler

Officers in attendance virtually: Becky Hatch and Lyn Hitchinson

Apologies for Absence

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Tisi.

Declarations of Interest

No declarations of interest were made.

Minutes

RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: That the minutes of the meeting held on Tuesday 20 February 2024 were approved.

Appointments

None

Forward Plan

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

- Highway Services Contracts - 27.03.24 - New Urgent Item
- Adult Social Care case management system implementation project status update - 27.03.24 - New Urgent Item
- Novello Theatre, Sale of Property - 24.04.24 - New Item
- Quality of Education - A review of academic year 2022/23 - 24.04.24 - New Item
- RBWM Leisure Management Contract re-procurement - 24.04.24 - New Item
- Lease renewal of office space at York House, Windsor - 24.04.24 - New Item
- Quarterly Assurance Report - 24.04.24 - New Item
- Empty Property Strategy – moved from 24.04.24 to 23.10.24 - To allow further scoping time.
- School Transport Policy 2024-25 – moved from 24.04.24 to 02.10.24 - As currently awaiting the completion of the peer review with Hampshire prior to making any policy changes.

- Bus Service Improvement Plan Refreshment - 22.05.24 - New Item
- SEND and Alternative Provision Capital Strategy 2024 update - 22.05.24 - New Item
- Appointments to Outside Bodies - 03.07.24 - New Item
- RBWM Gambling Act 2005 Statement of Principles, Three-Yearly Review - 03.07.24 - New Item

Proposal for the continuation of two Public Spaces Protection Orders (PSPO) in Windsor, Maidenhead and Ascot to address dog fouling, dog control and cycling prohibition areas

AGREED: That the order of agenda items be changed so that items 9 & 7 be considered first in that order. The usual agenda order would then resume.

The Chair, Councillor Werner, Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Community Partnerships, Public Protection and Maidenhead, invited Shay Bottomley to address the Cabinet as a registered public speaker. He was given 3 minutes to speak.

The Chair thanked the speaker for their comments and outlined some of the key points of the report, that he hoped would address the points that had been raised. He noted that an additional recommendation had been made since the agenda had been published and outlined what this was to the Cabinet.

Councillor Bermange, Cabinet Member for Planning, Legal & Asset Management said that the speaker had raised a good point and that he welcomed the review mentioned. The Chair agreed and said that he would be happy to look at this.

Councillor Price, Clewer & Dedworth East Ward, said that a resident had approached her about a huge amount of dog fouling recently. Once brought to the attention of the Community Wardens, Councillor Price said that signs had been put up the very next day to deter this. Residents had since said that this had worked as a preventative against dog fouling. The Chair thanked her and said that he'd like to explore the use of metal signs in some prominent places too in the future.

Councillor Wilson, Eton & Castle Ward, said that he welcomed the consultation to review the cycling operating hours. He said that it was very important to encourage cycling, especially for elderly persons getting into the town centres and commuters getting to the railway stations.

AGREED: That Cabinet noted the report and:

- i) **Approved the continuation of the Royal Borough of Windsor and Maidenhead, Antisocial Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014, Public Space Protection Order (dog control and dog fouling) 2021 and the Public Space Protection Order (cycling in pedestrianised areas) 2021 for a further 3 years.**
- ii) **Requested that the Assistant Director for Housing and Public Protection immediately reviews the restrictions relating to cycling and carries out the required consultation in relation to a potential variation to the PSPO to the hours of 10am to 5pm to bring it in line with restrictions on motor vehicles and delegates authority to the Executive Director of Place in consultation with the Leader of the Council to make any variations necessary to the PSPO as a result of the consultation responses.**

Achieving for Children (AfC) Reserved Ownership Decisions

The Chair introduced the report in the absence of the relevant Cabinet Member, Councillor Tisi. He outlined the recommendations that were before Cabinet and said that they as a Cabinet played an important role in the ownership governance of the jointly owned Children's Services organisation, Achieving for Children (AfC). The report sought three outcomes from

Cabinet, which were signoff on AfC's strategic direction for the next five years, the 2024/25 budget and the treasury plan.

Lucy Kourpas, Chief Operating & Finance Officer, thanked the Chair for his introduction. She added that there were two strategic plans included within the report, one which was slightly lengthier being targeted more so at professionals and a much shorter one which had been developed with young persons and would be used to explain what AfC was to them. The plan also reiterated AfC's commitment to diversity and inclusion, the environment, value for money and partnership working.

The Chair thanked Lucy Kourpas for her hard work and for the inclusion of young persons throughout the process of shaping the plan.

AGREED: That Cabinet noted the report and approved:

- i) the new AfC Strategic Plan (appendix A)**
- ii) the detailed 2024/25 budget (appendix B) including Medium Term Financial Strategy (appendix C)**
- iii) the Treasury Plan (appendix D)**

2023/24 Month 10 Budget Monitoring Report

Councillor Jones, Deputy Leader of the Council and Cabinet Member for Finance, introduced the report to Cabinet. She focussed on the changes that had been seen compared to the previous month's report. These included a change in adult/children's social care placements of £242,000, which was due to the need of additional residential placements because of complexed needs and to extend support packages. She added that these were demand led statutory services that had to be provided and that it was the Council's duty to support the needs of the borough's young persons.

Councillor Jones said that the second change was a revised forecast of staffing costs in Children's Services, caused by the use of agency staff leading to an added cost of £366,000. These agency staff cost approximately £30,000 more a year compared to that of permanent staff. The third change was a shortfall of income in adult social care regarding the sub-letting of block commission beds. Appendix B was shown to outline some risks moving forward and had been included for openness and transparency.

AGREED: That Cabinet noted the report and:

- i) Noted the forecast revenue outturn for the year is an overspend on services of £9.647m which reduces to an overspend of £6.069m when including unallocated contingency budgets and changes to funding budgets (para 4)**
- ii) noted the forecast capital outturn is expenditure of £41.125m against a budget of £89.541m (para 9); and**
- iii) approved the revenue budget virements set out in Appendix C.**

Council Plan 2024-28

The Chair introduced the report to Cabinet by saying that he welcomed the positive contributions from both residents and fellow Councillors from all parties during the consultation period. He especially wished to thank Councillor Hunt for encouraging her Conservative Group to engage positively in the process. He wished to praise the sessions that had been held with residents, charity groups and especially young persons. He said that it was of the utmost importance to put the Council on a strong financial footing to serve the borough effectively. Fixing the mess was therefore identified as being the first aim on the list of priorities, as this paved the way for the others. The second aim was for a cleaner, greener, safer, and more prosperous borough, which was close to the Chair's heart. The third aim was for children and young people to be offered the chances for a good start in life. Aim 4 was for people to live healthy and independent lives in supported communities. Finally, aim 5 was a high performing

Council that delivered for the borough. He wished for the Council to be at the heart of the community and for it to be outward looking and not inward.

The Chair then commented positively on the quality of the debate at the Corporate Overview & Scrutiny Panel that met to discuss the Council Plan a week prior to the meeting. Some changes had been suggested by the Panel, which formed part of the recommendation before Cabinet, which was to delegate to the Chair and the Chief Executive, the ability to make any changes to the Plan, following that Panel meeting. Most of the changes were being adopted, with others needing a few more final tweaks.

Councillor Coe, Cabinet Member for Household & Regulatory Services, wished to pick up on a comment made at the Panel meeting. He said that one of the key ways in which residents could engage with the Council was by complaining, with a route to doing this being via the 'report it' function. He wished to see that strengthened within the Council Plan, with a line being put in there to commit to improving the function. He said that it would reduce costs and save Councillor and Officer time. In the future, he wished for the function to be more user friendly and in turn, more smartphone friendly.

The Chair agreed and said that it certainly married up nicely with 2 of the aims that had previously been outlined. He confirmed that it had been discussed at the Corporate O&S meeting and that he in consultation with the Chief Executive, would certainly look to take it forward.

Councillor Reynolds, Cabinet Member for Communities & Leisure, said that Councillor Coe had raised a very important point and that he had recently experienced using the report it function to report a blocked drain in his ward. He had seen this being physically unblocked, but it was not until 5 weeks later, that this was actually communicated to him. Councillor Reynolds then commented on the consultations that took place. 16 parish Councils, 28 Councillors and the voluntary sector all had gotten involved, which was great to see.

AGREED: That Cabinet considered the Council Plan, including the Technical Appendix and:

- i) **Agreed to take the Council Plan to Full Council in April for consideration and agreement.**
- ii) **Considered the recommendations made by Corporate Overview & Scrutiny at their meeting on 25 March 2024, and agrees to accept these, as appropriate.**

Adult Social Care Case Management System

Councillor Del Campo, Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Housing Services, said that adult services consumed by far the greatest proportion of the Council's budget. She said that a historic reliance on an outdated system had led to a heavy reliance on spreadsheets, delays in billing and difficulties in reconciling the finances. The Mosaic system brought with it many positives, which residents would benefit greatly from. Phase 1 of the project had now been carried out; however, it had shown that the Council did not have all of the specialist skills required to complete the project internally. Full Council would be asked in April 2024, to approve the spend of £1.00m to complete the final stages of the project.

Councillor Price asked if this had been identified in the risk factors during the budget setting process. Councillor Del Campo replied by saying that she was aware of it. however, wished to avoid going down the fake budget route and therefore could not pinpoint specific costings to it as this was unknown.

AGREED: That Cabinet noted the report and approved £60,574 of capital expenditure for April 2024 to support the completion of the current phase of the case management system implementation.

Approval of Contract Award of the New Independent Adult Advocacy Service

Councillor Del Campo introduced the report by saying that the service was statutory and that the majority of it was paid for out of the better care fund, to provide adult services to vulnerable persons who needed it. This included persons who lacked capacity or potentially had mental health issues or learning difficulties. The contract was at a fixed cost and had a fairly low annual value, however as the total length of the contract exceeded £0.500m, it needed to come before Cabinet for approval.

AGREED: That Cabinet noted the report and:

- i) Approved the award of the new Independent Adult Advocacy Service as outlined in Appendix B.**
- ii) Delegated authority to Executive Director Adult Social Care, Health and Communities (DASS) in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Adults, Health and Housing Services to exercise the option to extend the contract for a period of up to an additional two years.**

Highways Services Contracts

Councillor Hill, Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, Customer Service Centre and Employment, introduced the report to Cabinet by firstly saying that the Highways Services Contract was broken down into 4 lots. Lots 2, 3 and 4 had already been awarded by Cabinet and were being mobilised. Officers had since investigated the figures when it came to Lot 1, hence why a new agreement had been reached and was now being presented before Cabinet for approval. He then commended the officers for their hard work on this.

AGREED: That Cabinet noted the report and:

- i) Delegated authority to the Executive Director of Place Services in consultation with the Cabinet Member for Highways and Transport, Customer Service Centre and Employment, and the Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for Finance to agree terms for the extension of required Highway services with the current supplier, VolkerHighways Ltd.**

The meeting, which began at 7.00 pm, finished at 7.40 pm

Chair.....

Date.....