

## CABINET

THURSDAY, 26 OCTOBER 2017

PRESENT: Councillors Simon Dudley (Chairman), David Coppinger (Vice-Chairman), Phillip Bicknell, Natasha Airey, MJ Saunders, Samantha Rayner and Jack Rankin

Principal Members and Deputy Lead Members also in attendance: Christine Bateson, Lisa Targowska, David Hilton, Philip Love and Ross McWilliams

Also Present: Councillor Mills

Officers: Alison Alexander, Rob Stubbs, Louisa Dean, Russell O'Keefe, Karen Shepherd, Kevin McDaniel and Barbara Richardson

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Cox, D. Evans and Carroll.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor N. Airey declared a Personal Interest in the item Windsor Middle School Expansion as she had attended the school between the ages 9-13 years. She remained in the room for the duration of the discussion and voting on the item.

### MINUTES

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

- i) The Part I minutes of the meeting held on 28 September 2017 be approved.**
- ii) The Part I minutes of the Cabinet Regeneration Sub Committee meeting held on 26 September 2017 be noted.**
- iii) The Part I minutes of the Cabinet Local Authority Governors Appointments Sub Committee meeting held on 5 October 2017 be noted.**

### APPOINTMENTS

The Chairman thanked Councillor D. Wilson for his significant contribution over a number of years as the former Lead Member for Planning. Councillor D. Wilson was a fantastic public servant.

The Chairman explained that following advice from the LGA Corporate Peer Review and to ensure the appropriate separation between the Executive and Scrutiny, all Principal and Deputy Lead Members had been removed from the membership of Overview and Scrutiny Panels. Councillor Sharma was to continue as Chairman of the Highways, Transport and Environment Overview and Scrutiny Panel, therefore the role of Deputy Lead Member – Bus Champion no longer existed. He thanked Councillor Sharma for the work he had undertaken in this role.

## 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 'Children's Services Capital Programme 2018-19' would now be considered by Full Council on 12 December 2017.

## CABINET MEMBERS' REPORTS

### A) WINDSOR MIDDLE SCHOOL EXPANSION

Members considered consultation on a proposal to expand St Peter's CE Middle School. The Lead Member explained that the council was aware of a deficit in places in the Windsor middle school system in September 2019. There were four middle schools in the borough. St Peter's was the smallest and had recently received a rating of Good by Ofsted. She congratulated the school and thanked the senior leadership team at Churchmead for their support. The report requested £20,000 to cover a feasibility study and consultation work. A report would come back to Cabinet in March 2018 to consider the feedback from parents and other consultees. The school currently took 60 children per year, this would increase to 90 starting with year 5 in 2019.

The Principal Member for Ascot Regeneration highlighted that the school had been in Special Measures in 2014; he was therefore pleased that it had recently been rated as Good. The success should be celebrated and the staff congratulated for their work in turning the school around. The expansion was wholly appropriate in light of the council's policy.

It was confirmed that 86% of schools in the borough were rated Good or Outstanding, this was up from 74% 18 months previously.

The Lead Member for Highways, Transport and Windsor commented that the expansion was well-deserved. Trevelyan, one of the other middle schools, had also been in Special Measures but was now rated as Good and was also fully subscribed.

The Chairman congratulated the senior leadership team, governors and teachers at the school.

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

- i) Approves public consultation on a proposal to expand St Peter's CE Middle School by 30 places per year group (from 60 to 90), starting with Year 5 in September 2019.**
- ii) Approves a budget of £20k to carry out feasibility work on the proposed expansion.**
- iii) Requests a report to Cabinet in March 2018 on the outcome of the consultation and the feasibility works.**

## B) FINANCIAL UPDATE

Members considered the latest financial update. The Lead Member highlighted that the review undertaken at the half way stage in the year to determine the adequacy of forecasts for the year-end balance had confirmed that £2m of funds would remain unspent.

The Lead Member for Economic Development and Property explained that the council had a longstanding discount rate relief programme. The scheme covered areas such as hardship, charities and newspapers. The recent business rate review that had been conducted centrally had been very challenging for some business therefore the council had set up new rate relief schemes:

- Public houses could receive a flat rate discount of £1000. The council had written to all 89 premises in the borough; so far 36 had applied for the rate relief. The council wanted to encourage the remaining premises to apply.
- Businesses which had experienced a significant change in their business rates or which had just gone above the threshold could apply for rate relief. The council had written to 900 businesses to encourage them to apply. The response had not been overwhelming therefore the council was working on what else it could do to encourage applications. An article would be included in *Around the Royal Borough* and a press release would be issued. The Town Centre Managers had also been asked to approach businesses directly.

The Lead Member for Economic Development and Property explained that currently the government funding was labelled for 2017/18 however there was much speculation as to whether the government would allow unused funding to be rolled over.

The Lead Member for Customer and Business Services confirmed that, to date, 12 applications for rate relief had been approved, which equated to a value of £235,000.

The Lead Member highlighted that the following month's report on budget preparation would allow for detailed review prior to the budget setting process in the new year. In the ever demanding world of local government finance it was increasingly important to have clear and transparent scrutiny. The report would include profiles of savings, fees and charges, and capital investments.

The Chairman highlighted the comment of the LGA Peer Review that the council had stable finances and was in a positive position to face the future.

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

**i) Notes the Council's projected outturn position for 2017-18 and mitigating actions to address service pressures.**

## 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 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 7.30 pm, finished at 7.48 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....