

## CABINET

THURSDAY, 26 JULY 2018

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

Principle Members also in attendance: Christine Bateson, Lisa Targowska, David Hilton and Ross McWilliams.

Also in Attendance: Cllr Lynne Jones (Opposition Leader).

Officers: Alison Alexander, Chris Anderson, Russell O'Keefe, Andy Jeffs, Kevin McDaniel, Hillary Hall and David Cook.

### APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

There were no apologies of absence received.

### DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor S Rayner declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest in item 6 (iii) Financial Update, she left the room for the duration of the discussion and voting on the item.

### MINUTES

**RESOLVED UNANIMOUSLY: that the Part I minutes of the meetings held on 28 June 2018 and 10 July 2018 were approved as a true and correct record.**

### APPOINTMENTS

None

### FORWARD PLAN

Cabinet considered the contents of the Forward Plan for the next four months and noted the changes made since the last team meeting.

### CABINET MEMBERS' REPORTS

#### A) PLAN-MAKING - BOROUGH LOCAL PLAN SUBMISSION VERSION (BLPSV)

Cabinet considered the report that sought authority to ask the planning inspector appointed to examine the Borough Local Plan Submission Version to recommend modifications to the plan as she considers necessary.

The Lead Member for Planning and Health informed that Mrs Louise Phillips had been appointed as the planning inspector that had taken place in June 2018. The council were awaiting the publication of the letter confirming the outcome of the inspection. The inspector was mindful that we would succeed, however she may have to recommend modifications. The inspector could not make any recommendations unless the council formally invited her to do so via this cabinet decision.

The Lead Member for Maidenhead Regeneration mentioned that he thought the council had already received the inspectors letter and was informed that the letter had been received but not the authority to publish it.

**Resolved unanimously: that Cabinet:**

- **Delegates authority to the Executive Director, Place to request the Local Plan Inspector to recommend such main modifications of the Borough Local Plan Submission Version as she considers necessary to enable its adoption.**

B) PARKING VOUCHER SCHEMES

Cabinet considered the report that proposes a number of changes to the current residential parking voucher schemes to enhance and to further protect parking spaces for residents and their visitors.

The Lead Member for Environmental Services including Parking informed that the proposals to change residential parking voucher scheme would be beneficial for residents, their visitors and help ease congestion. It was recommended to keep the number of annual free visiting vouchers at 25 x 2 hours. With additional paid for visiting vouchers with 25 for 6 hours and 25 all day. There would also be the opportunity to purchase vouchers online. Expiry dates would be introduced on the vouchers with an amnesty of two years for current vouchers. The recommendations would also have the benefit of reduced costs.

The Chairman mentioned that the proposals would be particularly beneficial in Windsor and that the current system allowed stoke piling of vouchers that could be detrimental to residents and visitors.

In response to a question from the Lead Member for Highways, Transport and Windsor it was agreed that the report should have made it clear that the scheme related to residential parking areas.

The Lead Member for Culture and Communities mentioned that the proposed scheme was still very generous, especially compared to other authorities and that the scheme retained free vouchers.

The Leader of the opposition asked if there were any residents that would be disadvantaged by the proposals and the Chairman responded that delegated authority could be given to the Lead Member and appropriate officers to review special circumstances and allow flexibility on a case by case basis.

The Executive Director also reported that the over 60's received a discount.

**Resolved unanimously: that Cabinet notes the report and:**

- **Agrees to keep the number of annual free visiting vouchers at 25 x 2 hours.**
- **Changes the annual allowance of additional paid for visiting vouchers to 25 x 6 hours and 25 x all day, from 1 August 2018.**
- **Changes the minimum order number of paid for vouchers to ten and then in multiples of five within the same order, and introduces a 12 month expiry date on each paper voucher with a no refund policy on any unused vouchers, from 1 August 2018.**
- **Agrees to the implementation of virtual visitor vouchers, from 1 October 2018, for those who wish to do this on-line.**
- **Agrees that all current unused, undated visitor vouchers will expire on 31 March 2020, allowing time for proactive communication to make residents in parking zones aware of this.**

- **Agrees to extend the current resident parking permits scheme period from 1-year to 2-years, from 1 August 2018.**

C) FINANCIAL UPDATE

Cabinet considered the council's latest financial update for 2018-19.

(Councillor S Rayner declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest as her family trust owned land that may be affected by the Heathrow proposals, she left the room for the duration of the discussion and voting on the item.)

The Lead Member for Finance introduced the report and informed that this was the first substantive review of the year where we could see how the Council's finances are doing. Over the course of the first few months there had been initial signs of some of the very significant national pressures which the Royal Borough were not protected from. In particular the significant pressures of growing placement costs for children in care and the importance of continuing to fully subsidise the housing benefit payments where it is not expected to fully recover certain overpayments.

There were also a number of less significant items within the report but the for mentioned were the two substantial issues where we were reflecting the national pressure. As a result it was important to acknowledge, as shown in appendix A, that there could be a accumulating over the year a net pressure. This net position had been subject to a range of mitigating measures being identified by Lead Members and officers. This position may be subject to further mitigating action as future possible pressures arise.

The Lead Member for Finance went on to explain that he was please to say that appendix B did show the council's reserves that had variances that more than offset, at this point in time, various amounts that had been settled above that accounted for. For example national non domestic rates (NNDR) pressure was expected to be reversed, section 31 grant of £186,000 and the adjustments to the business rates that we were confident of receiving £710,000. Looking forward because of business rates pooling with other Berkshire authorities it was anticipated that there would be generated £1.5 million in excess of the amount in the budget.

Appendix B also showed a couple of minus figures. The Berkshire Pension Fund valuation had shown that it was just below 75% funded. Although funding levels had risen to just above 75%. As the actuary had to use the latest valuation there had been identified additional contributions of £748,000 towards the pension deficit.

There was also a second figure, that was part of the report's recommendations, for £100,000 towards a judicial review with other authorities affected by the Heathrow proposals.

The Lead Member for Finance informed that as a consequence of the additional positive items the net contribution at this stage of the year exceeded the adverse variances. As a consequence the reserves were expected to be £9,352,000 compared to the £8,947,000 at the beginning of the financial year. This was significantly above the recommended level of between £5 to £6 million.

Cabinet were informed that it was expected that there would be continued pressures throughout the year which may impact on the current buffer of our reserves, however at this stage we could be confident that the net impact over the balance of the year was highly unlikely to have a material negative on the current projected balance.

The Chairman mentioned that there had been a recent statement from the Ministry of Housing, Communities and Local Government regarding local government funding with a proposal for the revenue support grant (RSG) to help the 158 local authorities affected which in 2019/20 could see the Royal Borough receive £2.200,000.

The Chairman also mentioned that the pressures in Children's Services were mirroring the national pressures with the same lack of funding that was previously seen in Adult Social Care. The pressures in Adult Social Care had been dealt with via the precept but there was no similar solution for our vulnerable children. The Local Government Association had identified £2 billion of pressure by 2020 and the same pressures were being felt locally. As a council we were determined to continue to protect the most vulnerable children in the borough.

The Chairman requested that a letter be sent signed by himself to the Secretary of State highlighting the pressures in children's services. The letter should show the pressures we see and the shortfall in funding that had been dealt with in adult social care by the precept. It should highlight the financial pressures being placed by the statutory and moral responsibilities to protect our vulnerable children. The Lead Member for Finance suggested and it was agreed to also add to the letter the financial pressures on the dedicated schools grant around high needs children.

The Leader for the opposition recommended that it would have been useful to have had the mitigating actions highlighted and also asked if the future pressures would impact on the capital programme and not result in the council loaded with debt. The Leader replied that he would arrange a meeting to discuss mitigating actions and that regarding the capital programme it could show the gross and net position and that there were a significant amount of investments for the regeneration programme. Other capital items, such as the Oaks Leisure Centre that would only commence when funding was available.

The Chairman also mentioned that it was ironic that the hottest temperature of the year had been reported today at Heathrow Airport when Cabinet were being asked to approve up to £100,000 for legal action to get answers for our residents.

**Resolved unanimously: that Cabinet:**

- **Notes the Council's projected outturn position for 2018-19 and requests the Directors to identify and propose mitigations for the projected variance.**
- **Approves an additional budget of £100,000 for the Council's contribution to the legal costs relating to Heathrow expansion to be funded from the General Reserve.**

**D) OLD WINDSOR LIBRARY EXTENSION**

The Lead Member for Culture and Communities introduced the Cabinet regarding the proposed improvements to be carried out to upgrade the Old Windsor community library.

Cabinet were informed that the total amount of money required to carry out these works was £146,850 and that this would enhance the already excellent service our libraries provided. More space would be provided for residents and staff. The Royal Borough had the most successful loans per resident performance in the country, stock was updated and there was a new container library on order with the existing one going to be a permanent placement in Sunninghill. Our libraries were important for the health and wellbeing of our residents.

The Lead Member for Children's Services said that this was great news especially with the planned expansion of St Peters Middle School.

In response to a question from the Chairman Cabinet were informed that the planned work was due to be completed in March 2019.

The Leader of the Opposition agreed that this was good news and she recalled an email she sent to the Chairman, who was then the Lead Member for Finance, back in 2015 requesting improvements to the library. The Chairman replied that he was pleased the work was being scheduled and that this was great news for residents of Old Windsor along with the £259,000 highways investment at the A308 Straight Road, Datchet Road roundabout.

**Resolved unanimously: that Cabinet notes the report and:**

- **Approves capital funding of £134,850 to enable the extension works to Old Windsor Library to proceed.**

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.

The meeting, which began at 7.30 pm, finished at 8.10 pm

CHAIRMAN.....

DATE.....