

Cabinet – Meeting held on Monday, 20th December, 2021.

Present:- Councillors Swindlehurst (Chair), Mann (Vice-Chair), Akram, Anderson, Bains, Carter (left 8.06pm), Hulme and Pantelic

Apologies for Absence:- None

PART 1

50. Declarations of Interest

Item 6 'Procurement of services with the voluntary sector for prevention and carer support': Councillor Carter declared that his company, Haymill Computers Ltd, provided some services to Slough CVS. He withdrew from the meeting during consideration of this item.

Item 6 'Procurement of services with the voluntary sector for prevention and carer support': Councillor Akram declared that she was a volunteer. She stayed in the meeting and participated in consideration of the item.

51. Appointment of Commissioners

The Cabinet noted that two commissioners appointed by the Department for Levelling Up, Housing & Communities (DLUHC) had commenced their roles with the Council from the start of December 2021. The role of the Commissioners had been set out in the report to Cabinet on 15th November 2021 on the 'DLUHC Reviews and Intervention'.

Max Caller was the Lead Commissioner and Margaret Lee was the Finance Commissioner. Mr Caller was present at the meeting and was welcomed by the Leader of the Council on behalf of Members.

52. Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th November 2021

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 15th November 2021 be approved as a correct record.

53. Cabinet Portfolios and Responsibilities

The Leader of the Council reported that he had made some changes to Cabinet portfolios and Lead Member responsibilities. The changes followed the re-election of Councillor Swindlehurst as Leader for a further term of office to May 2023 and had been carried out following consultation with the Commissioners.

The main changes were summarised and included transferring portfolio responsibility for financial matters from the Leader to a dedicated portfolio for Financial Oversight, Council Assets and Performance, for which Councillor Anderson would be the Lead Member. The Leader would take portfolio

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responsibility for corporate resources as well as retaining forward strategy. Councillor Carter would become Lead Member for Housing & Environment.

The Leader also confirmed that he had appointed Councillor Mann as Deputy Leader of the Council. He thanked Councillor Akram for the service she had provided in that position during his time as Leader.

The changes were effective immediately and following a series of one-to-ones would become fully operational from 1st January 2022.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Cabinet note the revised portfolios and responsible Lead Members as appointed by the Leader of the Council.
- (b) That the appointment of Councillor Pavitar Kaur Mann as Deputy Leader of the Council be noted.

54. Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan

The Principal Environment Officer introduced a report and gave a comprehensive presentation on the Council's Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan, which the Cabinet was recommended to adopt.

The strategy had been developed following the agreement of a Council motion on climate change in July 2019 and the adoption by Cabinet of the Climate Change Strategy Vision which had outlined a target of borough wide carbon neutrality by 2040, with a stretch target of 2030. The Strategy & Action Plan set out the challenges of how these ambitious targets for the borough could be met. Lead Members noted the extensive work that had gone in to prepare the strategy including the public consultation earlier in the year.

The Cabinet had also previously adopted a Carbon Management Plan for the Council, which set an aim for SBC to be carbon neutral by 2030. The new strategy had a broader focus on seeking to achieve carbon neutrality across the town, not just for the Council. It was noted that the Council itself accounted for a small proportion of overall emissions and that 58% of emissions in Slough were from a mixture of residential, commercial and industrial buildings, and 31% from transport of which the vast majority was road transport. The Action Plan set out the wide range of measures to reduce emissions including improving energy efficiency and greater use of renewables, reducing waste, increasing tree coverage and switching to electric vehicles.

The comments of the Commissioners as set out in report were noted as were the financial implications that highlighted that in light of the current financial situation, the Council could not commit to any new expenditure or capital projects. The key role for the Council would be leading and influencing change in the borough. The Cabinet recognised that its proximity to the M4

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and Heathrow as well as the significant industrial base on Slough Trading Estate meant that engagement with partners such the Department for Transport and SEGRO would be crucial. The Officer explained how these partners had been engaged in the development of the strategy through various workshops that had been held.

Members agreed the importance of strong monitoring and reporting arrangements to assess whether the strategy was on track to be delivered over the coming years. It was highlighted that the Council would also need to lead by example an ensure climate change was a consideration in decision-making across the Council when developing policies on housing, transport etc. The Officer commented how the Carbon Management Plan influenced decisions within the Council, for example that carbon was already a factor in the Council's procurement process.

The Cabinet agreed that it was crucial that the Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan was aligned to all new strategies and policies across the Council, including the emerging Local Plan. The Leader proposed and it was agreed that a further resolution be added to the recommendations to explicitly state that the strategy be integrated into other Council policies and plans. It was also agreed that a progress update be provided to Cabinet in six months on the steps taken to implement the plan, including engaging with public and private sector partners, and to monitor progress. The Climate Change Strategy & Action Plan was then adopted.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan be adopted.
- (b) That the adopted strategy be integrated into other Council policies and plans where appropriate.
- (c) That the Cabinet receive an update report in six months that set out the progress in implementing the strategy and action plan, including work with and the role of partners.

55. Adult Social Care Transformation Update and Procurement

The Lead Member for Social Care & Public Health and the Executive Director, People (Adults) introduced a report that updated the Cabinet on the Adult Social Care transformation programme and sought approval to procure external support to ensure the delivery of phase 2. The Cabinet was recommended to approve the direct award of a new six month contract to Peopletoo Limited at a cost of £215,000 with the possibility of a six month extension for an expected maximum total of £450,000. The Executive Director explained the tasks that Peopletoo were undertaking to help to Council identify and deliver the savings programmes.

It was noted that Peopletoo had been engaged to support phase 1 of the transformation programme with a contract in place between March 2021 to

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September 2021. Since 1st October 2021 the Council had been operating under an implied arrangement with Peopletoo and the recommendations sought to formalise that agreement to March 2022 with the possibility of a further 6 month extension. The Lead Member expressed disappointment that the report was being presented to Cabinet after the expiry of the previous contract with Peopletoo and emphasised the importance of due process being followed. The Commissioners comments also highlighted that it was unacceptable that contract standing orders had not been complied with and was an example of the fundamental change to culture and process that was required across the Council. Mr Caller addressed the Cabinet to reinforce these points and highlighted the importance of a proper procurement exercise with the key deliverables clearly set out.

The Executive Director commented that there were some other contracts in adult services that would be coming to Cabinet to be formalised and explained the main reason the situation had occurred was due to the significant workload pressures in adult social care. As this was not the only contract in such a position Lead Members requested that an update on the status of contracts due to be tendered in 2021/22 as listed in the report to Cabinet of 12th April 2021 be provided. It was confirmed that a review of contracts was underway.

Lead Members asked a number of questions about the process, the role of Peopletoo, value for money and the levels of savings being delivered by the transformation programme. The Executive Director highlighted that the programme aimed to deliver in excess of £9m of savings across three years to 2024. The quality of support Peopletoo had been providing was excellent and the Council did not currently have the internal capacity or expertise without the external support. Lead Members accepted the need for suitable support to deliver the savings, but commented that building up the internal capacity and skills should be a future priority.

After due consideration, the Cabinet agreed that it was important the necessary support was in place to support the continued delivery of savings through the adult social care transformation programme, therefore the recommended six-month extension to March 2022 was approved. Instead of agreeing the further six month extension beyond March 2022 via delegated authority, the Cabinet agreed to receive a further report on the future procurement in Spring 2022 with a report that set out the expected deliverables of any such contract.

Resolved –

- (a) That the good progress on the delivery of the Adult Social Care transformation programme and the planned phase 2 be noted.
- (b) That the procurement of external support to deliver phase 2 of the Adult Social Care transformation programme be approved.

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- (c) That the direct award of a new six month contract to Peopletoo Limited to provide this support for phase 2 of the Adult Social Care transformation programme at a cost of £215,000 be approved; and delegated authority be given to the Executive Director for People (Adults), following consultation with the Lead Member for Social Care and Public Health, to commence formal procedures to procure the contract with Peopletoo Limited.
- (d) That the Cabinet receive a further report in Spring 2022 on the future procurement arrangements.

(Having declared an interest in the next item of business, Councillor Carter left the meeting at this point.)

56. Procurement of services with the voluntary sector for prevention and carer support

The Lead Member for Social Care and Public Health and the Group Manager, People Strategy introduced a report that retrospectively asked the Cabinet to agree an extension of the contract with Slough Council for Voluntary Services for prevention and carer voluntary services to the value of £473,254 for a period of 12 months from 1 July 2021. Approval was also sought to delegate authority to the Executive Director for People (Adults) to commence the procurement of a contract for such services for 2+1 years beyond June 2022 and then bring back a report to Cabinet to determine the award of contract.

It was recognised that this was second contract discussed that had expired and was seeking to be regularised. The Cabinet and the Lead Commissioner reiterated the comments made during consideration of the previous item that the process was unacceptable and the procedural defects needed to be addressed across the Council in its contracting and procurement processes.

The purpose of the contract was explained and the Cabinet agreed that support for such preventative services was valuable and should continue. It was therefore agreed that the first recommendation relating to the extension of the contract for 12 months from 1st July 2021 be approved. In terms of the procurement after June 2022, it was agreed that in addition to receiving a report in future to award a further contract, Cabinet and People Scrutiny Panel would receive an additional report in the Spring 2022 at a much earlier stage of the procurement process, to approve the model and deliverables, including any implications arising from the integration of health and social care services through the Integrated Care System. Lead Members requested that this report also include an update on the current contract including key performance indicators.

Resolved –

- (a) That the extension of the contract with Slough Council for Voluntary Services for prevention and carer voluntary services to the value of £473,254 for a period of 12 months from 1 July 2021 be approved.

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- (b) That delegated authority be given to the Executive Director for People (Adults), following consultation with the Lead Member for Social Care and Public Health, to commence procurement for the prevention and carer voluntary services.
- (c) That a report on progress of the contract and procurement process for the new prevention and carer voluntary services be provided to scrutiny and then to Cabinet by the Spring of 2022.

57. References from Overview & Scrutiny

There were no references from Overview & Scrutiny.

58. Notification of Key Decisions

The Cabinet considered and endorsed the Notification of Key Decisions published on 19th November 2021 which set out the key decisions expected to be taken by Cabinet over the next three months.

Resolved – The published Notification of Decisions be endorsed.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.35 pm and closed at 8.54 pm)