

Cabinet – Meeting held on Monday, 15th April, 2024.

Present:- Councillors Smith (Chair), Chahal (Vice-Chair), I. Ahmed, Bedi, Kelly, Manku, Muvvala and Wright

Also present:- Councillors Dhillon, Iftakhar and Shaik

Apologies for Absence:- None.

PART 1

123. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

124. Minutes of the Meeting held on 18th March 2024

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 18th March 2024 be approved as a correct record.

125. Slough Adult Social Care Strategy 2024-29

The Lead Member for Adult Social Care, Mental Health and Learning Disabilities introduced a report that sought approval of the Adult Social Care Strategy 2024-29.

The document set out the Council's vision for adult social care services in Slough, including the expectations that residents, service users and providers could have about the service. It focused on developing care and support options, not only for current and potential service users and those close to them, but to all residents in offering a proactive and partnership approach to prevention and early intervention. The strategy was aligned to other key documents recently approved by Cabinet including the Older People Strategy, Carers Strategy, Learning Disability Strategy and Autism Strategy.

The Cabinet particularly welcomed the engagement with the Co-Production Network who had reaffirmed their agreement to the seven priorities within the strategy. Lead Members asked how the strategy would be delivered and monitored and it was responded that a strategy board would be set up to oversee implementation. One of the key aims of the approach would be to enable people to be more independent and the performance framework would need to help measure how that was being achieved. Questions were asked about the financial implications. The Executive Director for Adult Services stated that there were no direct financial implications arising from the adoption of the strategy and any proposals coming forward to deliver it would be subject to due diligence and financial appraisal. Members also discussed links with the voluntary and community sectors and the process for reviewing and updating the strategy through to 2029.

After due consideration the strategy was approved.

Resolved – That the Slough Adult Social Care Strategy 2024-29 set out at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

126. Adult Social Care Market Position Statement 2024/27

The Lead Member for Adult Social Care, Mental Health & Learning Disabilities introduced a report that requested approval of the Adult Social Care Market Position Statement 2024/27.

The statement sought to reflect the current picture of demand for care and support alongside the design, supply and utilisation of provision across the market to meet the changing needs of local people, and within the current financial challenges being experienced across social care. It provided strategic information to providers to inform their business plans within the context of meeting the Council's strategic priorities and to deliver service innovation and value for money. The Cabinet was informed that it was best practice for the authority to have a Market Position Statement and it would help the Council work with the market to deliver services more efficiently and achieve the best outcomes for people in Slough.

Lead Members asked about procurement process and it was responded that the Council wide procurement forward plan to be considered elsewhere on the agenda included details of the key adult social care contracts that were anticipated to commence tendering during the next year. The gross expenditure budget for commissioned services had increased to £43m in 2024/25 following the rebasing exercise undertaken as part of the Medium Term Financial Strategy.

At the conclusion of the discussion the recommendations were agreed.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Adult Social Care Market Position Statement 2024/27 (Appendix 2) be approved to ensure the Council can signal clear intentions and opportunities to the market.
- (b) That the feedback from local providers following consultation on the contents of the draft Market Position Statement (Appendix 3) be noted.
- (c) That delegated authority be given to the Executive Director People Adults, in consultation with the Lead Member for Social Care and Public Health, to make updates to the Market Position Statement.

127. Adult Social Care Direct Payments Policy

The Lead Member for Adult Social Care, Mental Health & Learning Disabilities introduced a report that sought approval of the Adult Social Care Direct Payments Policy.

Direct Payments allowed recipients to use the money to organise, arrange and purchase services directly to meet their care and support needs rather than receive services commissioned by the Council.

There were 368 people in Slough who received a Direct Payment during 2023/24 from 1st April 2023 to the end of November 2023 and 327 in receipt of any ongoing payment as at 30th November 2023. A total of £4.7m was paid directly to recipients through direct payments between 1st April 2023 to 31st January 2024. The Cabinet was informed that the formal adoption of the policy would help ensure the proper management and administration of the payments.

Members asked about the process for reviewing the payments and it was noted that peoples needs were regularly assessed and their Direct Payments may change as a result of any change in need. After due consideration the policy was agreed.

Resolved – That the Adult Social Care Direct Payment Policy, shown at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.

128. 2023-24 Q3 Corporate Performance Report

The Leader of the Council introduced the Corporate Performance Report for the third quarter of 2023/24 which set out progress on the key performance indicators adopted by the Council.

It was noted that the overall picture was variable with 23% of the 43 key performance indicators performing at or better than target; 14% marginally worse than target; and 33% performing below the red KPI threshold. The remaining 30% of indicators were monitored for trends. Compared to the previous month or similar period from last year, performance had improved for 37% of indicators; remained the same for 14%; and declined for 49%. The Leader drew attention to the Commissioners comments that the report provided clarity on the areas that were underperforming which should help identify key areas for improvement.

The Cabinet welcome the positive progress reported against a number of indicators such as reduced waiting times in customer services, continued high performance in determining planning applications and an improvement in the Council Tax collection rate. Lead Members reaffirmed their commitment to openness and transparency on publishing such performance data, and to use the information to seek to drive forward improvements in their respective portfolios.

At the conclusion of the discussion, the Cabinet agreed to note the report and refer it to full Council for consideration in line with the previous agreement to take the report to all members on a six-monthly basis.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Council's current performance and mitigating actions as measured by the key performance indicators within the corporate management information report and scorecard be noted; and
- (b) That it be agreed to refer the report to full Council on 25th April 2024.

129. Slough Borough Council Equality Objectives, 2024-2028

The Leader of the Council introduced a report that set out the final proposed statutory equality objectives for Slough Borough Council for the period 2024-2026, following the results of the recent public consultation. The objectives covered both employment and service provision and were as follows:

- Objective 1: Improve outcomes for children and young people who are more likely to be disadvantaged based on their protected characteristic, including SEND.
- Objective 2: Work with partners, including housing providers, to target health inequalities and well-being between those from different protected characteristic groups.
- Objective 3: Work with partners to improve community safety, in particular focusing on violence experienced by women and girls.
- Objective 4: The Council uses a robust and comprehensive set of employment data to inform its workforce strategy and management practice, as well as benchmarking and sharing good practice.
- Objective 5: The Council actively ensures that the profile of its workforce (including the profile of major providers of commissioned services) broadly reflect the community it serves/local labour market.
- Objective 6: Political and executive leaders demonstrate personal knowledge and understanding of local communities and continue to show commitment to reducing inequality.

Amongst the recommendations the Cabinet was being asked to agree to commission the LGA to undertake a peer review against the LGA Equality Framework. The Cabinet agreed that a commitment to equality was an important priority and should be a core part of the everyday practice and way of working across the Council. A Lead Member commented that the SBC workforce should broadly reflect the demographics of the town and the Cabinet discussed how the objectives and forthcoming Peer Review could help make progress in this respect.

The Chief Executive highlighted that Objective 5 stated that the profile of the workforce should broadly reflect the community it served and that the Council

Cabinet - 15.04.24

would seek to learn from other authorities and organisations about how this could be further progressed.

A Lead Member commented that there had been a relatively low response to the consultation and requested that further consideration be given to public engagement to seek to encourage higher responses to future consultations.

After due consideration the equality objectives and other recommendations were agreed.

Resolved –

- (a) That the 2024-2026 equality objectives as set out in the report be agreed.
- (b) That delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Leader of the Council, to agree performance measures for each objective.
- (c) That it be noted that reporting of progress on the workforce objectives will be to the Employment Committee.
- (d) That the commissioning of the LGA to undertake a peer review against the LGA Equality Framework be agreed, subject to budget being identified.

130. Contaminated Land Strategy 2024-2030

The Lead Member for the Environment, Environmental Services and Open Spaces introduced a report that sought approval of the updated version of the Contaminated Land Strategy.

The strategy outlined the Council's approach to determining if land was contaminated and the measures to be taken to remediate the land to ensure it did not pose a risk to human health or the environment. The Cabinet agreed the strategy. In relation to the request to delegate authority to review the Priority List, this was agreed subject to adding that the delegation should be exercised in consultation with the Lead Member.

Resolved –

- (a) That the Contaminated Land Strategy 2024 - 2030 (see Appendix 1 to the report) be adopted and approved.
- (b) That the review of the Priority List (see Appendix 2) be approved, and delegated authority be given to the Executive Director of Housing, Regeneration and Environment, in consultation with the Lead Member for the Environment, Environmental Services and Open Spaces, to amend this as appropriate, following the review.

131. James Elliman Homes – Options Appraisal

The item was withdrawn and a report would be provided to a future meeting of the Cabinet.

132. Procurement forward plan for services in excess of £180k and works in excess of £1m in 2024/25

The Lead Member for Finance, Council Assets, Procurement and Revenue & Benefits introduced a report that sought authority to commence the procurement for contracts of an estimated value of over £180,000 for services and £1m for works that were proposed to be let in the 2024/25 financial year. Further reports would be brought to Cabinet during the year with any updates.

In response to questions raised about the process, the Cabinet was reminded that the planned procurements in the appendix were included in approved revenue budgets and relevant decisions on contract awards would come back to Cabinet. Approving the procurement forward plan would enable the commencement of tendering to take place. Lead Members agreed the importance of robust monitoring of procurement activity to ensure the Council was properly adhering to its policies and achieving value for money.

At the conclusion of the discussion the recommendations were agreed.

Resolved –

- (a) That the commencement of procurement for the list of goods, works and services set out in Appendix A be authorised;
- (b) That delegated authority be given to the Executive Director of Adults services following consultation with the Lead Member for Adult Social Care, Mental Health and Learning Disabilities and the Section 151 Officer, to award small block contract arrangements for residential and nursing placements to the best value bidders, as indicated in Appendix A due to the need to award multiple short term contracts whilst a strategic commissioning review is undertaken.

133. References from Scrutiny

The Leader welcomed the references from the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee in relation to the Task & Finish Group on preparedness of Adult Social Care for the CQC inspection and those arising from the extraordinary scrutiny meeting on 13th March 2024 on the Council's recovery and improvement.

The Chair of the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee addressed the Cabinet and outlined the work done during the year to improve the effectiveness of scrutiny. He then summarised the recommendations as set out in the report. The Cabinet commended scrutiny members for the work

Cabinet - 15.04.24

they had done and accepted the recommendations on each of the matters referred as set out in Table 1, column iii of each set of recommendations.

Resolved – That the references from the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee be agreed as per the recommendations in Table 1, column iii of the reports:

- A. Recommendation from the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 28th November 2023 - Task and Finish Group report on the preparedness of ASC for CQC assessment.
- B. Recommendation from the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 13th March 2024.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 8.19 pm)