

Cabinet – Meeting held on Monday, 20th May, 2024.

Present:- Councillors Smith (Chair), Chahal (Vice-Chair), E. Ahmed, Bedi, Kelly, Manku, Shah, Shaik and Wright

Also present:- Councillors Akram, Gill, Matloob and W. Sabah

Apologies for Absence:- None.

PART 1

1. Declarations of Interest

No declarations were made.

2. Minutes of the Meeting held on 15th April 2024

Resolved – That the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 15th April 2024 be approved as a correct record.

3. Destination Farnham Road

The Lead Member for Housing, Highways, Planning and Transport introduced a report that sought authorisation to proceed with the Destination Farnham Road scheme which aimed to deliver a series of improvements to facilitate economic growth and improve the public realm of the area.

The Council had been awarded £9.3m of capital through Round 2 of the Government's Levelling Up Fund to implement strategic transport infrastructure works to support the development of high quality places. The Cabinet considered the documents appended to the report including the results of the public consultation that had been held between December 2023 and February 2024 and the final preliminary designs for the scheme. There had been 481 responses to the consultation and the Cabinet welcomed the high level of engagement with members of the public and local businesses to refine the scheme.

The Leader invited local ward members, Councillors Waqas Sabah, Akram and Matloob to address the Cabinet. The councillors welcomed the scheme overall, however, a number of specific points were raised about how it could be improved. These included a suggestion of a one-way system on Montrose Avenue; the need to properly enforce parking restrictions to seek to avoid any negative spillover impacts on adjoining streets and stop dangerous parking; use of the planning process to provide a wide mix of business uses not just takeaways; and the use of durable and sustainable materials to seek to maintain the quality of the public realm over time. Members also commented on the importance of cycling and pedestrian access and requested that an

Cabinet - 20.05.24

holistic approach be taken to the future plans for the area of which this scheme was one part.

The Leader thanked Members for their comments and input throughout the process. He commented that the proposal for the one-way scheme had been considered but wasn't considered feasible, however, Officers did indicate that they would continue to look at proposals from ward members and bring forward any proposals if appropriate. Some other specific amendments to the drawings had been suggested in light of the feedback received since the report had been published and it was proposed and agreed that delegated authority be given to the Executive Director of Regeneration, Housing and Environment, in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, Highways, Planning and Transport, to make some amendments to the final scheme design to reflect the comments of ward members and queries raised by Cabinet about the extent of the proposed 20 mph zone.

The Cabinet welcomed the scheme and agreed it would help further enhance the Farnham Road area. Lead Members commented on the need to deliver the scheme at pace and take steps to minimise disruption during construction works. A number of queries were raised about how the project would be managed and costs would be controlled to ensure there was no overspend. The Executive Director responded that contingency had been built into the budget and a dedicated project manager would be appointed. Lead Members asked to be kept updated on progress at regular intervals. Questions were asked about the impact of the scheme on traffic flows and assurance was provided that the scheme had been very carefully designed to maintain the traffic flows at the same time as controlling speed and improving safety.

The Cabinet agreed the recommendations set out in the report and the additional proposal agreed during the course of the discussion to add a delegation to the Executive Director to make amendments to the final scheme drawings to reflect some of the points raised by ward members and by Lead Members in relation to the extent of the 20mph zone.

Resolved –

- (a) That the carry-forward of £2.6m of unspent 2023/24 capital budget for the Destination Farnham Road Scheme into the 2024/25 capital programme be approved.
- (b) That the General Fund Capital Programme for 2024/25 to 2027/28 be amended to reflect a capital budget for Destination Farnham Road of £2.6m in 2024/25 and £7.5m in 2025/26.
- (c) That the final preliminary designs for the Destination Farnham Road scheme as set out in Appendix 2 to the report be agreed, subject to (d).
- (d) That delegated authority be given to the Executive Director for Regeneration, Housing and Environment, in consultation with

Cabinet - 20.05.24

the Lead Member for Housing, Highways, Planning and Transport to make necessary changes to the drawings relating to the ward councillor feedback and 20mph zone.

- (e) That delegated authority be given to the Executive Director for Regeneration, Housing and Environment, in consultation with the Lead Member for Housing, Highways, Planning and Transport, to consider any statutory representations and decide whether to make the necessary traffic regulation orders.
- (f) That the commencement of a procurement process for construction works be approved and that an update report be brought back to Cabinet to approve the appointed contractor.

4. Local Government Digital 360 Review

The Lead Member for I.T., Customer Services, Revenue & Benefits, Procurement and Performance introduced a report on the recent Digital 360 Review carried out by the Local Government Association on the Council's ICT & Digital service.

The review covered six themes – leadership, data, organisational capacity, security and resilience, services and value. The LGA had made nine recommendations that would improve the Council's digital capability and capacity to support the recovery of the authority. The actions to implement the recommendations were Council wide, highlighting a need to work more collaboratively, make better use of resources through more effective prioritisation and having a clear vision of what a digital council would look like. To fully address the recommendations it was proposed that Council reviewed and revised the existing ICT & Digital Strategy and this would come back to Cabinet in September 2024.

The Chief Executive commented that the review had been welcomed by Officers, and that whilst it had been recognised that the initial focus of the Council had been on foundational improvements to its IT the next phase needed to make IT a key part of the Council's wider transformation. There would be tough decisions on prioritising resources and this point was supported by Lead Members who highlighted that any future investment proposals in the revised plan would need to demonstrate clear business benefits. The Cabinet agreed the important role that IT could play in service improvement across the Council and therefore welcomed the review and agreed to consider the revised ICT & Digital Strategy later in the year.

Resolved –

- (a) That the content and recommendations contained in the LGA Review, Appendix 1 to the report be noted; and
- (b) That a revised digital strategy be submitted to Cabinet for approval in September 2024 by the Director of Digital, Data and Technology.

5. Children & Young People - Slough Corporate Parenting Strategy 2024-27

The Lead Member for Education and Children's Services introduced a report that sought approval of the Corporate Parenting Strategy 2024-27.

The strategy outlined the three-year plan for corporate parenting responsibilities for children and young people and set out the vision for children and young people for whom the Council had corporate parenting responsibilities for the period 2024-2027. It set the priorities for children and young people cared for and outlined improvements to services and practice for children who were looked after or had care experience, so they were 'Happy, Safe & Loved, Thriving'.

The Lead Member highlighted the importance of listening to the voices of children and the Cabinet was informed that the strategy had been written with young people. A partnership approach would be taken to deliver on the identified priorities and the Corporate Parenting Panel had done a significant amount of work in the past year to improve its effectiveness.

The Cabinet welcomed the development of the new strategy and the engagement of children and young people. It was agreed that all Members had an important role to play as corporate parents and steps should be taken to promote greater involvement from all councillors.

At the conclusion of the discussion the strategy was approved.

Resolved – That the Corporate Parenting Strategy set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

6. Business Case for Health Visiting and School Nursing Service

The Lead Member for Equalities, Public Health and Public Protection introduced a report that sought approval to award the Health Visiting and School Nursing services for 0-19 years in line with the national Health Child Programme (and up to 25 years for SEND). The proposed contract award to a preferred bidder followed an open procurement process in accordance with the Public Contracts Regulations 2015.

The current contract for health visiting and school nursing would end on 30th September 2024. Re-commissioning the current service was an opportunity to reevaluate current systems whilst being innovative in learning from other providers and commissioners of these services. Local Authorities had mandated responsibilities under the Health and Social Care Act 2012 to ensure the delivery of universal and targeted Healthy Child Programme to the whole child population. Universal and targeted public health services provided by health visiting and school nursing teams were crucial to improving the health and wellbeing of all children and young people.

Cabinet - 20.05.24

It was noted that the Cabinet had previously agreed to explore joint commissioning across Berkshire East, however, an agreement on potential collaboration had not been reached and each authority had therefore moved forward individually on their contracting arrangements. The recommissioning of the Health Visiting and School Nursing Service would enable Slough Borough Council (SBC) to update the service model offer in line with the modernised Healthy Child Programme (HCP). The new model had four levels of service – universal, targeted, specialist and community.

The proposal was to award the contract to 'HRCG Care Services Limited' from 1st October 2024. Details of the tender process were included in the Part II appendix which was considered by the Cabinet in taking the decision during the meeting without disclosing any of the exempt information. The proposed cost was £2.9m per annum and would be let for three year with an option to extend for a further two years. The funding was allocated from the ring-fenced Public Health Grant.

Lead Members asked about the contract management and key performance indicators. The Director of Public Health responded that data quality had been an important consideration in the re-commissioning process both in terms of contract monitoring and crucially in whether the service was delivering for Slough residents. The Cabinet emphasised the importance of managing the potential risks of transition between the current and future provider and Officers explained the steps being taken.

At the conclusion of the discussion the recommendations were agreed.

Resolved –

- (a) That the outcome of an open competitive tender process for the procurement of the Health Visiting and School Nursing services 0-19 Healthy Child programme (and up to 25 years for SEND) be approved;
- (b) That the award of the contract to bidder 'HRCG Care Services Limited' to commence from 1st October 2024 be approved. The contract would be for a period of three years, with an option to extend for a period of up to 24 months at a value of £2,910,034 per annum, and total contract value of £14,550,170 over the five-year contract period;
- (c) That the further award of a £174,000 per annum to bidder HCRG Care Services Limited as a transformational fund for HCRG to utilise be approved. The additional funding was allocated as part of the Public Health ring fenced grant. These funds would be used to support collaborative work and more integrated delivery at individual, community and population level whilst contributing to the Authority's starting well priorities for improving health outcomes for children and young people and reducing inequalities below:
 - Decrease the attainment gap between all children and the bottom 20% at Early Years Foundation Stage

Cabinet - 20.05.24

- Reduce the number of Reception and Year 6 aged children classified as obese
- Improve immunisations rates amongst young people; and
- Improve oral health amongst children.

7. References from Scrutiny

The Cabinet considered a report that set out the recommendations of the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee from its meeting held on 23rd April 2024 on Resident Engagement and Building Trust.

Lead Members agreed the importance of seeking to rebuild trust and engage with residents. The Leader highlighted the finding from the LGA survey in February 2023 that showed residents confidence in the Council was very low and he stated that it was a priority for the administration to take a range of steps to rebuild trust over time. It was recognised that this was a long term aim and the recommendations of the scrutiny task and finish group made a contribution to this. The Cabinet therefore welcomed the work Members had done to provide some specific proposals that could be taken forward. The detailed recommendations were set out in Table 1 Column iii of the report and they were all accepted by the Cabinet.

Resolved – That the recommendations of the Corporate Improvement Scrutiny Committee from its meeting held on 23rd April 2024 relating to the Task & Finish Group on Resident Engagement and Building Trust be agreed as per Table 1 Column iii of the report.

8. Exclusion of Press and Public

All business was conducted during Part I of the meeting without disclosing any exempt information and it was not necessary to exclude the press and public.

9. Business Case for Health Visiting and School Nursing Service - Appendix

Resolved – That the Part II Appendix be noted.

Chair

(Note: The Meeting opened at 6.30 pm and closed at 7.52 pm)